WOMENS' RIGHTS IN ISLAM
– MODERNISING OR OUTDATED? – PART 1

(Back Ground Azaan, By Brother Yusuf Islam)

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(Azan Continued)…

(Dr. Mohammed) Assalaamu Alaikum… May peace be on you all.

Honorable Justice Kazi, respected elders, distinguished guests, members of the press, friends, brothers and sisters.

There are many social traumas, problems and conflicts… women in society face today, and we sincerely need to find viable holistic and humanistic solutions to them.

In this context, the subject of ‘Women’s Rights’ is of much contemporary analytical relevance, and human interest.

A reason enough, for all of us to have gathered here today, inspite of options of other pre occupations.

On behalf of the Islamic Research Foundation… I, Dr. Mohammed Naik, the co-ordinator for the programs, today welcome you all with earnest pleasure, and sincere appreciation from the heart.

We begin today’s program formally with the Qiraat by Brother Ashraf Mohammey, which will be followed by the reading of its English translation.

(Ashraf Mohammedy) Asalamu Alaikum Wa Rahmatullahai Wabarakatuhu.

(Arabic)…

The translation … ‘I seek refuge with Allah from Satan the accursed

In the name of Allah Most Gracious Most Merciful’.

‘O Humankind reverence your Guardian Lord who created you from a single person, created of like nature his mate and from them twain scattered like seeds countless men and women, Reverence God through whom you demand your mutual rights and reverence the wombs that bore you.

For God ever watches over you

To orphans restore their property when they reach their age nor substitute your worthless things for their good ones and devour not their substance by mixing it up with your own, for this is indeed a great sin.

Verily Allah speaks the Truth’.

(Dr. Mohammed) Assalaamu Alaikum… Thank, you brother Ashraf.

For those who may be introduced new to the IRF and its activities, I would like to briefly outline the IRF, and its work.

The IRF was initially started in February 1991, to cater to the need for proper Islamic knowledge amongst the educated Muslim youth - Youth who may be ignorant about Islamic teachings, youth who may tend to be wrongly apologetic about Islam, and youth who may not know how to properly present and practice Islam, for the whole world at large, to appreciate and look up to.

Now the IRF has been growing in many other deserving areas of its other objectives, specially in humanitarian relief activities and educational upliftment.

Amongst its popular services, IRF has a collection of more than 1,300 Video cassettes and more than 4,000 Audio cassettes, on Islam and Comparative Religion, available for free hire in Bombay.

It also has to its credit, more then 50 publications on Islam and Comparative Religion, which are available free on request, all over India.

To promote education, the need of the day, amongst our people, the IRF Educational Trust was established 1½ year back of which Dr. Zakir happens to be the chairman.

Today Dr. Zakir will be speaking on the topic… 'Women's Rights in Islam – Modernizing or Outdated?'

This would be followed by a Question and Answer session, in which you all have a right to question and cross examine him, on the topic and the matter presented in a very open format.

When we consider the rights and justice for women in this open court of ours today, in context of Islamic laws and views, it is

very befitting, and our esteemed pleasure to have amongst us the eminent Judge, Honorable Justice Muhammad Mujeebuddin Qazi, to preside over this programme.

Justice Qazi has been for 13 years from 1968 to 1981, the government pleader at the Nagpur Branch of the Bombay High Court, being the highest law officer of the Government of Maharashtra, there of.

Then, Justice Qazi became the first Muslim, after Justice M. C. Chagra to be elevated from the Bar to the Bench, as a Judge of the Bombay High Court, where he has been delivering judgment, from 1981 till 1992.

On the eve of his retirement in 1992, a very leading Newspaper of Central India 'The Hitwada', had this to say about him… 'Justice Qazi belongs to the fast vanishing breed of gentlemen Judges'.

Justice Qazi, is at present a member of the Minorities Commission, and earlier has been a member of the advisory board Islamic and Comparative Law Journal, in New Delhi.

After his retirement as a high court Judge, Justice Qazi has been fortunate, and been honoured with the elevation, to the position of Chairman, Maharashtra Administrative Tribunal, opposed equal to that of the rank of the Chief Justice of the Bombay High Court.

This high powered Tribunal, is the substitute and bifurcation of the Bombay High Court for all government service matters.

To top it all, his hand bill… 'Demeanor' and manners as well as a deep anguish and care for real human progress, make him an make him an apt personality, to precede… to preside over today's proceedings.

He would be introducing the importance and significance of the topic for the day, as well as introduce Dr. Zakir Naik, who he is

well acquainted with.

Brothers and sisters... Justice M. M. Qazi

(Justice M.M. Qazi) The distinguished speaker Dr. Zakir Naik, Dr. Mohammed Naik, former Governor and Ambassador Mr. Talyar Khan, the foreign dignitaries, ladies and gentlemen.

At the outset, I would like to thank the organizers of Islamic Research Foundation, for having invited me to preside over this function.

I would also like to thank Dr. Mohammed Naik, for having said few good words about me.

As you are already aware, the subject of the talk this morning is... 'Women's Rights in Islam - Modernizing or Outdated?'

Modernizing means... 'Something which is not antiquated, but in the context of the subject it would mean - the rights given to women in Islam, fourteen centuries back, are relevant even today'.

The debate, on the position of women in social spectrum, has been going on since centuries - but of late, it has assumed somewhat alarming proportions in certain matters.

Issues such as Talaq, Polygamy, participation of Muslim women in Socio-political activities, are subject of regular comment and discussion in the media.

There may have been problems, but at the same, time it is a fact that some of the issues were over played by the Media.

No doubt, the Western woman has today obtained, Socio-economic and
Lego-political rights, through hectic struggle, which was carried on for over 200 years.

But friends, I would like to tell you, that in the struggle, in the process, she has lost everything.

She has lost, if you have closely observed the Western society... you will agree with me that she has lost her family life, she has lost peace of mind, she has lost even her honour and womanhood.

On the contrary... Islam has given, has bestowed on women innumerable rights, fourteen centuries back, when contemporary civilizations were still considering whether women could be regarded as a human being.

We are therefore to examine objectively, dispassionately and coolly, whether the rights, so given in Islam are really adequate, and therefore relevant even today.

You are fortunate to have an eminent speaker Dr. Zakir Naik, who is going to deal with the subject exhaustively, and therefore it is not necessary for me to refer to all those verses in the Holy Qur'an, and the number of traditions of the holy... of the Prophet of Islam, pertaining to the rights of women.

However I will refer to the two verses, in order to demonstrate that woman has been given a dignified position in Islam - Verse No. 228, Chapter 2, Surah Baqarah, as translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, whose work is supposed to be the most standard work, reads as under....

'And Women shall have rights, similar to the rights against them, according to what is equitable, but men have a degree of advantage over them'.

I would like you to bear in mind, every word of this Verse - It has unequivocally being declared, that men and women have similar rights against each other.

These words... this part of the verse has no where been diluted anywhere in the Qur'an, however the verse further says that men

have a degree of advantage over women.

It is really these words which we have to be… we have to be sure about, because it is here that most of the people have faltered, and even some of the commentators have misconceived these words.

But at the outset I would like to tell you, that these words have nothing to do with the rights between the parties… rights as I have already… we have already seen just now, have been unequivocally declared in the earlier portion of this Verse that… 'Men and women have similar rights against each other'.

In order to fully appreciate this Verse, these words namely that… 'Men have a degree of advantage over women', we will have to refer also to another Verse - Verse No. 34, Chapter 4, Surah Nisa.

It reads… its translation reads as under… 'Men are the protectors and maintainers of women, because Allah has given the one (more) into bracket (strength) bracket close than the other, and because they support them for their means'.

This Verse… Verse again lays down that… 'Men are the protectors and maintainers of women'.

It further says that… 'God has given one more than the other'.

Admittedly, a woman is a weaker sex and she has got to be given special protection in certain matters.

Anthropologically, man is stronger and also different, which is also a biological truth.

No doubt nature has given him this advantage, for which no credit goes to man, and no discredit to women on that account - But I would like to tell you that this advantage, is also being given to men in order, so that he is.. he is able to effectively discharge his functions.

Honorees task has been cast on him, that of a protector and maintainer and therefore this advantage which has been given to him, has nothing to do with the rights, as I have already said earlier.

In fact this advantage, in no way reduces the rights of women … nor it, her importance.

Therefore the real question that would arise, would be… I would request you to ponder over, and think about the state of affair, in the social set up today.

According to me, this is one of the most important and delicate function of the men… to give protection to women.

It is in a very… you see, in a very deep sense, which has to be understood - It is not wholly an ordinary protection, in the sense of saving one's life - Please try to understand and appreciate.

I would request you to… to think over, whether men are discharging their functions… and if you closely examine, I have no doubt, you will come to this conclusion, that… that… that men have abdicated their most important function… that of giving protection to women, and therefore have neglected their… their elementary duty.

I do not want to enter into a dialogue or a debate at this time, because there is no time at my at my disposal, as to who is responsible for bringing about this tragic situation.

May be that women may… may have also been responsible for this… bringing about this situation.

But the fact remains, that this has exposed women to forces of crime and oppression, leading to widespread cases of violation of her honour and dignity. *** 16 Sec

In the back drop of Indian ethos, we shall sanctify womanhood.

No woman would like to bargain for such liberty, and no man would like to give up his… agree to give up his role as a 'protector'.

This extremely delicate aspect of relationship between man and woman, has been explained by one of the great thinkers and the… and Poet… Doctor Iqbal, in a poem titled - 'Women's Protection'.

Of course the poem is in Urdu – It … it consists of three couplets… but I will translate them… these three couplets… there after I have recited these three couplets.

Iqbal says… 'Ek Zinda Haqiqat Mere Seene Mein Hai Mastoor, Ek Zinda Haqiqat Mere Seene Mein Hai Mastoor, Kya Jaanega Woh Jiske Ragon Main Hai Lahoo Sard, Kya Janega Woh Jiske Ragon Main Hai Lahoo Sard, Na parda Na Taleem, Nai Ho Ke Purani, Nisfaniyat E Zan Ka NigeBaan Hai Faqat Mard, Jis Kaum Ne Zinda Haqi Jis Qaum Ne Is Zinda Haqiqat Ko Na Paya, Us Qaum Ka Kursheed Bahut Jald Huwa Zard'.

The translation would be that… 'Jis Kaum Ne Ye Zinda haqiqat Kon Na Paya' - The nation which has not realised this truth …sorry.

'Ek Zinda haqiqat Mere Seene Mein Hain Mastoor' - a living truth lies deep into my heart.

'Kya Samjhegan Woh Jiske Ragon Mein Hai Lahoo Sard'- It is not for those whose senses are frozen.

'Na Parda Na Taleem, Nai Ho Ke Puranee' - It is neither veil nor education… new or old.

'Niswaniyat e Zan Ka Nigeban Hai Faqat Mard' - The protector of the dignity of women, is man alone.

'Jis Qaum Ne Ye Zinda Haqiqat Ko Na Paya' - A nation which has not discovered this… this truth.

‘Us us Kaum ka Kurshid Bahot Jald Huwa Zard’ - It’s sun is bound to fade away.

Friends, as I have already said… that I have extremely limited time at my disposal, and Dr. Zakir is already there, who is going to deal with the subject exhaustively… exhaustively, sufficiently suffice.

I have… non the less; I would like to tell you, that woman has been given a very dignified position, in Qur’an.

And the real problem is only, one of our own ignorance, of Quran’s real spirit

Therefore the real solution would be, to educate and enlighten the people.

May I remind you at this moment, the great words of Thomas Jefferson that… ‘A nation which expects… which expects to be ignorant and also free, it expects what never was, and never will be’.

‘Wo Mauzis The Zamane Mein Musalman Hokar, Aur Tum Khwar Piye Tarike Qur’an Hokar’.

Ladies and gentlemen, we have amids’t us, Bombay’s young but brilliant and irradiate speaker, Dr. Zakir Naik.

Though he is a doctor by profession, but he has dedicated himself to the cause of propagation… propagation of Islam, in it’s right perspective.

He is founder General Secretary of Islamic Research Foundation, which was established in 1991.

He is… he has widely traveled within and outside country, and has delivered number of lectures.

At such a young age, he has developed deep insight into Qur'an - which reminds us what Tagore has said that… 'A lamp cannot light another lamp, unless it continues to burn it's own flame'.

It would be most unfair, if on this occasion, I ignore, I do not mention the distinguished parents of Dr. Zakir Naik, but for whose guidance and blessings, he would not have been what he is today.

I once again thank you very much - Thank you very much.

(Clapping)…

(Dr. Mohammad) The talk by Dr. Zakir Naik, on today's topic - Dr. Zakir Naik.

(Dr. Zakir) (Arabic

Honorable Justice M. M. Qazi, respected elders and my dear brothers and sisters, I welcome all of you with the Islamic greetings… 'As-salaamu Alaikum Warahamatullahi Wabarakatuhu'… meaning… 'May peace blessing and mercy of Almighty Allah, be on all of you'.

The topic of today's day is - 'The Women's Rights in Islam - Modernising or Outdated?'

According to the Oxford dictionary, 'Women's Rights are the rights, that promote a position of social and legal equality, of women to men'

According to the Oxford dictionary, 'they are the rights, claimed for the women, equal to those of men, as regards to suffrage that right to vote, as regards to property, etc'.

'Modernising', according to the Oxford dictionary means, 'to make modern, to adapt to modern needs or habits'.

And according to the Webster's dictionary it means… 'To make

modern, or to give a new character or appearance - e.g., to modernise ones ideas'.

In short, modernising is a process of updating or opting for the betterment of the present status itself - It is not the present modern status itself.

Can we modernise ourselves, to master our problems, and to realize a new way of life, for the whole human race?

I am not concerned about the modern ideas, the conclusions and the categorical statements made by scientists and inexperienced armchair experts, as how a life should be lived by a woman.

I am going to base my conclusions and considerations on truth, which can be proved by experience

Experience and unbiased factual holistic analysis, are the sure test, between the gold of truth, and the glitter of theory.

We have to check our thinking against reality, otherwise many a times, our mental process will go astray - Indeed the great brains of one time, believed that the world was flat.

If we agree with the 'Women's rights in Islam', as portrayed by the Western media, you have no option, but to agree that the 'Women's rights in Islam' are outdated.

The Western talk of women's liberation, is actually a disguised form of exploitation of her body, deprivation of her honour and degradation of her soul.*** 10 Sec

The Western society which speaks of upgrading the status of women in Islam, have actually reduced her status to concubines, to mistresses, to society butterflies, which are mere tools in the hands of sex marketers and pleasure seekers, which are disguised behind the colorful screen of art and culture.

Islam's radical revolutionary support, gave women their due right

and status in the days of ignorance... 1,400 years ago.

Islam's objective was and continues to be, to modernise our thinking, our living, our seeing, our hearing, our feeling and striving for the women's upliftment and emancipation in the society.

Before I dwell further with the topic, I would like you to make note of a few points.

The first point is that, 'approximately one fifth of the world's population, consists of Muslims'

There are different Muslim societies - Some may be close to Islam, some may be far away from Islam

The 'Women's rights in Islam' should judged according to the authentic sources, and not what individual Muslims do, or what the Muslim society does.

The authentic sources of Islam, are the Qur'an, which is the word of God, and the authentic Sunnah, and the traditions of our beloved Prophet (may peace be upon him).

Point number four - the Qur'an will never contradict itself, nor will the Shahih Hadith contradict itself... neither will these two authentic sources, contradict each other.

Point number five – 'Sometimes the scholars differ, and many a times, these differences can be removed by analyzing the Qur'an as a whole, and not just by quoting one particular Verse'.

Because if one particular verse of the Qur'an if its ambiguous many a times the answer is given somewhere else in the Qur'an - Some people quote one source and neglect all the other sources.

And the last point is – 'It is the duty of every Muslim, male or

female, to seek the pleasure of Allah (SWT), and to act as His trustee on this world, and not to try and gain fame or satisfy one's own ego.

Islam believes in equality of men and women – 'Equality' does not mean 'Identicality'.

In Islam, the role of a man and woman… it is complimentary, it is not conflicting - It is that of a partnership - it is not contradictory, so as to strive for supremacy.

Where 'Women's rights in Islam' is concerned, I have divided into 6 broad categories.

The first are 'the Spiritual rights', second are 'the Economical rights', third are 'the Social rights', fourth are 'the Educational rights', fifth are 'the Legal rights', and last are 'the Political rights'.

Let us analyze 'the Spiritual rights' of women in Islam

The greatest misconception that the West has about Islam, is that they think… 'Paradise in Islam, is only meant for the male - it is not meant for the female'.

This misconception can be removed by quoting from Surah Nisa, Ch. No. 4, Verse No 124, which says.

(Arabic)…

Which means – 'If any of you do deeds of righteousness, whether it be male or a female and has faith, they shall surely enter Paradise and not the least injustice shall be done to them'

A similar thing is… a similar thing is repeated in Surah Nahl, Ch.16, Verse No.97 which says… 'If any of you perform good deeds, be it a man or a women and is a believer, We shall give you good life and We should reward you for all your good works' .

Just because in Islam, sex is not the criteria to enter Paradise… will you call such rights in Islam as modernising or outdated?

Another misconception is that, which the Western media has, that… 'The woman has no soul'.

In fact, it was in the seventeenth century, when the Council of wise men… when they gathered at Rome, and they unanimously agreed that the woman had no soul.

In Islam, man and woman have the same spiritual nature, and that was clarified by our young Qari, Brother Ashraf Mohammedy, who recited the Verse from Surah Nisa, Ch.4, Verse No.1.

(Arabic)…

Which that… 'O humankind reverence your guardian lord, who has created you from a single person and created like nature his mate' .*** 15 Sec

A similar thing is mentioned in Surah Nahl, Ch.16, Verse No.72, which says that… 'We have made for you companions and mates of your own nature'

Again in Surah Al-Shura, Ch.42, Verse No.11, it says… (Arabic)…

'He is the one who has created the heavens and the earth and has made for you pairs from among yourselves'

Just because the spiritual nature of a man and woman is the same in Islam, will you call such rights in Islam, as modernizing or outdated?

The Qur'an clearly mentions that… 'Allah (SWT) has breathed somewhat of His spirit into the human beings'.

If you read Surah Hijr, Ch.15, Verse No.29, it says… 'When I have fashioned you in due proportion and have breathed into you something of my spirit, fall ye down in obeisance'

A similar thing is repeated in the Qur'an, in Surah Sajdah, Ch. 32, Verse No.9, which says...

(Arabic)...

Means... 'We have fashioned you in due proportion and have breathed into you something of My spirit' .

Here, when Allah (SWT) refers to... 'As something of My Spirit, is breathed into the human beings' - it does not mean, a sort of incarnation or a pantheistic form.

It means that Allah has given to every human being something of His spiritual Nature, and the Knowledge of God Almighty, and coming closer towards Him

Here it refers to both Adam and Eve (may peace be upon them) - Both were breathed something of Allah (SWT)'S Spirit.

Again we read in the Qur'an, that Allah has appointed the human being as His vicegerent, as His trustee, as is mentioned in Surah Isra, Ch.17, Verse No.70, which says....

(Arabic)...

That... 'We have honoured the children of Adam and bestowed on them special favours'.

Sorry... Here all the children of Adam have been honoured, male as well as female.

There are some Religious scriptures, for example the Bible, which puts the blame on Eve for the downfall of humanity.

In fact if you read the Qur'an in Surah Araf, Ch.7, Verse No.19 to 27, Adam and Eve (may peace be upon them both) are addressed, more than a dozen of times.

Both disobeyed God, both asked for forgiveness, both repented,

and both were forgiven.

In the Bible, if you read Genesis, Ch. 3, only Eve is held responsible (May peace be upon her) for the downfall of humanity.

And according to the doctrine of 'Original Sin', because of Eve (may peace be upon her) the whole of humanity is born in sin.

If you read the Bible in Genesis, Ch. 3, Verse No.16, it states that the God of... 'the Bible' it is saying 'Unto the woman you shall bear in conception and in sorrow shall you give birth and your desire shall be of your husband and he shall rule over you'

That means, pregnancy and child birth has been said in the Bible to degrade the women and the labour pain is a sort of punishment.

In fact if you read the Qur'an, pregnancy and child birth have uplifted the women.

If you read Surah Nisa, Ch.4, Verse No.1, it says... 'Respect the womb that bore you'.

Its mentioned in Surah Luqman, Ch.31, Verse No.14, it says ... (Arabic...).

That... 'We have enjoined on the human being to be kind to the parents, in travail upon travail did their mother bore them and in years twain was their weaning'

A similar thing is mentioned in Surah Ahqaf, Ch.46, Verse No.15... (Arabic)...

It again repeats, which says... 'We have enjoined on the human beings to be kind to his parents'.

To be kind to the parents - in pain did their mother bore them, and in pain did she give them birth - Pregnancy in the Qur'an has

uplifted the women not degraded her

Just because pregnancy has uplifted the women in Islam will you call such rights in Islam as modernizing or outdated?

The only criteria for judgment in the sight of Allah is ‘Taqwa’, ‘God consciousness’ or ‘righteousness’

It is mentioned in Surah Hujurat, Ch.49, Verse No.13 ‘O humankind, We have created you from a single pair of male and female and have divided you into nations and tribes, so that you shall recognize each other not that you despise each other and the most honored in the sight of Allah, is the one who is the most righteous’.

Sex, colour, caste, wealth has got no criteria in Islam - The only criteria in the sight of Allah it is ‘Taqwa’, neither is sex the criteria for Allah (SWT) to reward or to punish a person.

If you read Surah Imran Ch.3 Verse No.195 it says ‘I will never suffer the loss of any of you, be it male or female, you are companions unto each other’.

I had started my talk by quoting a verse from the Qur’an From Surah Al Ahzab, Ch.33, Verse No.35, which says

‘Innal Muslimeena Was Muslimati’ - ‘For Muslim men and Muslim women’

‘Wal maomineena Wamomiminati’ – ‘For believing men and women’

‘Wa Kaniteena Wakantaati’ – ‘For devout men and women’

‘Wa Saadikeena Wasaadkaati’ – ‘For true men and women’.

‘Wa Sabireena Wa Saabiraati’ – ‘For men and women who are patient and constant’.

‘Wa Musaddikeena Wamusadikaati’ – ‘Or men and women who give in charity’.

‘Wa Saaeemeena Wasaaimaati’ – ‘For men and women who fast and deny themselves’.

‘Wal hafizeena Furoojaheen Wa hafizati’ – ‘For men and women who guard their chastity’

‘Wa Zaakireenallahu Kasuraon Wazaakiraati’ – ‘For men and women who engage much in Allah’s (SWTala’s) praise’

And the verse ends by ‘Aradallahu Wa magfirataon Wa Airframe Azeena’ – ‘That for them Allah has prepared forgiveness and ample of reward’

This verse indicates that the spiritual duties, the moral duties, for the men and women in Islam are the same - Both have to believe, both have to pray, both have to fast, both have to give Zakat, etc, etc.

But the women has been given certain concession in Islam.

If she is undergoing her menstrual period or pregnancy, she does not have to fast - She can keep those fasts later on, when she is more healthy

In fact, during the menstrual period and during the postnatal period, she need not pray also - She has been given the concession, and neither does she have to compensate it later on.

Just because the moral duties of the men and women are equal in Islam will you call such rights in Islam as modernizing or outdated?

Let us analyze the Economical rights - Islam gave economical rights to the women 1,300 years before the West.

An adult Muslim woman can own, she can dispose or disown any

of her property without consulting any one, irrespective whether she is married or she is single.

In 1870, it was the first time in England, that the West recognized the rights of the married woman, where she was allowed to own or dispose any of her property without consultation.

I do agree that the women were given their economical rights 1300 years ago - these are ancient rights - but the question is – ‘are they modernizing or outdated?’

A women in Islam, if she wishes to work she can work - There is no text in the Qur’an or the authentic Hadith which prevents or makes it prohibited for a woman to do any work, as long as it is not unlawful, as long as it is within the preview of the Islamic Shariah, as long as she maintains her Islamic dress code

But natural, she cannot take up jobs, which exhibit her beauty and body - Like for example, modeling and film acting, and such kind of jobs.

Many of the professions and jobs which are prohibited for the woman are also prohibited for the man, for example serving liquor.

For example working in gambling dens - For example doing any unethical or dishonest business - All these jobs are prohibited for both men and women.

A true Islamic society requires women to take up profession such as doctors.

We do require female Gynecologists - We do require female nurses - We do require female teachers

But, a woman in Islam has got no financial obligations - The financial obligation is laid on the shoulders of the man in the family - Therefore she need not work for her livelihood.

But in genuine cases, where there are financial crisis in which both the ends do not meet, she has the option of working

Here too, no one can force her to work - She works out of her own, absolute free will.

Besides the professions I mentioned, she can work in the house and take up tailoring, she can take up embroidery, she can do pottery, she can make baskets etc

She is also allowed to work in factories and small scale industries in which, which has been designed exclusively for the ladies.

She can work in places which have got separate sections- gents and ladies, because Islam does not agree with intermingling of the sex

She can also do business, and where it comes to doing transactions, where it involves interaction with a foreign male, with a Na-Mehram, she should do it through a father or a brother or husband or a son

And the best example I can give you is of Bibi Khatija (may Allah be pleased with her) who was the wife of our beloved Prophet (may peace be upon him)

She was one of the most successful business women of her times and she did the transaction through her husband, Prophet Muhammed may (May peace be upon him)

A woman in Islam has been given more financial security, as compared to the man.

As I told you earlier, she... the financial obligation is not put on her shoulder - It is put on the shoulder of the man in the family

It is the duty of the father or the brother, before she is married and the duty of the husband or the son, after she is married to look after her lodging, boarding, clothing and financial aspects of her.

When she gets married, she is on the receiving end.

She receives a gift - she receives a dower or a marital gift, which is called as 'Meher'.

And it is mentioned in the Qur'an in Surah Nisa, Ch.4 Verse No.4 which says.... (Arabic)...

'Give to the woman in dower, a marital gift' .

For a marriage to solemnize in Islam, 'Meher' is compulsory.

But unfortunately in our Muslim society here, we just keep a nominal 'Meher' to satisfy the Qur'an, say 151 Rupees, or some people give 786 Rupees and they spend lakhs and lakhs of Rupees on the reception, on the decoration, on the flowers, on the lunch parties, on the dinner parties.

In Islam, there is no - there is no lower-limit, nor is there an upper limit for 'Meher ' - But when a person can spend lakhs of Rupees on the reception, surely the 'Meher ' should be much more.

There are various cultures which have crept into the Muslim societies, specially in the Indo-Pak area

They give a small amount of 'Meher ' and they expect the wife to get a fridge, to get a T.V set, they expect the wife to give a flat, to get a car, etc., and a large sum of dowry, depending upon the status of the husband

If he is a graduate, they may accept - they may expect 1 lakh - If he is an engineer they may expect 3 lakhs- If he is a doctor they

may expect 5 lakhs.

Demanding dowry... a husband demanding dowry from the wife, directly or indirectly is prohibited in Islam.

If the parents of the girl give the girl something out of their own free will, it is accepted - But demanding or forcing directly or indirectly, it is prohibited in Islam

If a Woman works, which she does not have to - whatever earning she gets, it is absolutely her property.

She need not spend a single pai on the household - if she wants to spend it is her free will.

Irrespective how rich the wife is, it is the duty of the husband to give lodging, boarding, clothing and look after the financial aspects of the wife.

In case of divorce or if a wife gets widowed, she is given financial support for the period of ‘Iddah’ - and if she has children, she is also given child support

Islam gave the right to the women to inherit, centuries ago.

If you read the Qur’an - in several verses, in Surah Nisa, in Surah Baqarah and in Surah Maidah, it is mentioned that a woman irrespective, she is a wife or she is a mother, or a sister, or a daughter, she has a right to inherit - And it has been fixed by Allah (SWT) in the Qur’an.

And I do know, there are bound to be questions - that the inheritance law of in of Islam is unjust.

But time does not permit me to clarify this - Insha Allah I will expect a question on this and then I can deal with this topic more in detail.

Let us go further and analyze the social rights of a women in

Islam.

Broadly it can be categorized into four sub-headings... Social rights given to a daughter, to a wife, to a mother and to a sister.

Coming to the social rights given in Islam, to a daughter - Islam prohibits, female infanticide - The killing of female children is forbidden in Islam

It is mentioned in Surah Taqveem, Ch. 81, Verse No. 8 and 9, 'when the female child is buried alive and when she questions you, for what crime was she killed'.

Not only female infanticide has been prohibited, all sorts of infanticides has been prohibited in Islam, whether it be a male child or a female child.

It is mention in the Qur'an in Surah A'nam Ch.6, Verse No.151 that, 'Kill not your children for want of sustenance for it is Allah that will provide sustenance for you and for children'

A similar thing is mentioned in Surah Isra, Ch.17 Verse No.31 which says... 'Kill not your children for want of sustenance, for it is Allah that will provide sustenance to you and your children, for killing of children is a major sin'.

In the pre-Islamic Arabia, whenever a female child was born mostly she was buried alive.

Alhamdullillah, after the spread of Islam this evil practice has been discontinued.

But unfortunately it still continues in our country India - According to a BBC report, in the programe assignment the title of which was 'Let Her Die', there was a British reporter by the name of Emily Beckenen, who came all the way from Britain to India to give us the statistics of the female infanticide.

This programe was shown more than a year back on the star T.V. and Alhamdullillah, it is being shown every month, and just a few days ago it was again retelecast.

In that programe, it gives the statistics, that every day more than 3,000 fetuses are being aborted on being identified that they are females

If you multiply this figure by the number of days, that is multiplied by 365, you get a figure of more than one million female fetuses are being aborted every year in our country.

And there are big hoarding and posters in states like TamilNadu and Rajasthan, which says spend 500 Rupees and save 5 lakh Rupees

What does it mean? - That spend Rupees 500 on medical examination like Aminocententus or Ultra Sonography, and identify that the child the mother is carrying

If it is a female you can abort it and you'll save 5 lakh Rupees - How?

The couple of lakhs you spend on upbringing her and the remaining lakhs of Rupees you spend on giving dowry

According to the report of the government hospital of Tamil Nadu – 'out of every 10 female children that are born, four are put to death' - No wonder the female population in India is less than the male population

Female infanticide was continuing in our country since centuries - If you analyze the statistics of the 1901 census, for every 1000 males there were 972 females

According to the 1981 statistics and census, it tells you for every 1000 males you have 934 females

And the latest statistics of 1991 tells you that for every 1000

males you have 927 females

You can analyze that the female ratio is dropping every year - And since science and medicine has advanced, it has helped in this evil practice

Just because Islam tells you that you should not kill any children whether it be male or female will you call these rights in Islam as modernizing or outdated?

Islam not only prohibits killing of infant children, it also prohibits, and it rebukes you on rejoicing on the birth of a male child and you getting saddened on the news of a female child.

If you read Surah Nahl, Ch.16, Verse No.58 & 59, it tells you that… 'when news is brought to one of them of a birth of a female child his face darkens and is filled with inward grief'.

He hides himself in shame from his people because of the news he has received.

Should he let her live in suffering or should he bury her in dust - Ah! what a evil choice they have

Qur'an not only prohibits female infanticide, it rebukes at the thought of you rejoicing at the birth of a male child and getting saddened at the birth of a female child

In Islam, a daughter should be brought up correctly

And according to a Hadith in 'Ahmed', the Prophet (may peace be upon him) he said 'Anyone who brings up two daughters properly, they will be like this to me on the day of judgment' – Means, 'will be very close to me on the day of judgment'

And there's another Hadith which says, that 'Anyone who up brings 2 daughters properly and takes good care and brings them up with love and affection, they will enter Paradise'

In Islam, there should be no partiality in upbringing of the daughters or the son.

According to a Hadith, of our beloved Prophet it said that, 'In the presence of the Prophet, once a man kissed his son and placed him on his lap but did not do the same to his daughter.

The Prophet immediately objected and said that you are unjust - You should have even kissed your daughter and placed her on the other lap'.

Prophet Muhammed (may peace be upon him) he did not only speak about justice, he also practiced it.

Let us analyze, the rights of a wife in Islam.

All the previous civilizations, they have considered the women to be an 'instrument of the devil'.

The Qur'an refers to the women as 'Mohsana', that is a 'fortress against the devil'.

And if a woman, who's good, marries a man, she prevents him from going on the wrong path and keeps him on the 'Siratulmustakeem' – that is the correct path.

There's a Hadith in which Prophet Muhammed (may peace be upon him) he said that, 'there is no monasticism in Islam' .

And again according to Sahih Bukhari, Volume No. 7, Ch. No. 3 Hadith No 4 it says that 'the Prophet ordained the young men, all those who have the means to marry, they should marry - For it will help them to lower their gaze and guard their modesty.

There is another Hadith related by Anas, in which the Prophet said... 'Any one who marries completes half his deen'.

Once somebody asked me, that... 'does it imply that if I marry twice I will be completing my full deen?'

The person misunderstood the message of the Prophet.

When the Prophet said that… 'When you marry you complete half your deen' - It means that when you marry it shields you from promiscuity, it shields you from fornication, it shields you from homosexuality, which lead to half the sin in this world

Only when you marry, do you have opportunity to become husband or a wife - Only when you marry do you have opportunity to become a father or a mother

And the duties of the mother and the father and that of a husband and wife are very important in Islam

So it makes no difference whether a man marries once twice or thrice or four times - He yet completes only half his deen.

The Qur'an say's that… 'We have put love into the hearts of the husband and wife' .

If you read Surah Rum, Ch. 30, Verse No. 21 it says that… 'And amongst our signs We have created for you mates or companions, so that you may dwell in them in tranquillity and we have put love and mercy between your hearts'.

According to Surah Nisa, Ch.4, Verse No.21, marriage is considered as a misaq, a sacred agreement, a sacred contract.

According to Surah Nisa, Ch.4, Verse No.19, it says… 'You are prohibited to inherit women against their will' - Means, to marry the permission of both the parties are required.

It is compulsory that the man and women both should agree to marry No one - not even the father can force their daughter to marry against her wishes.

There's a Hadith in Sahih Bukhari, Volume No. 7, Ch. No. 43, Hadith No. 69, which says 'that a lady she was forced by her

father to marry against her wishes' - And she went to the Prophet and the Prophet invalidated the marriage'

Another Hadith in Ibn-e-Humbal, Hadith No. 2469, it says 'that a daughter was forced by her father to get married - And when the daughter approached the Prophet, the Prophet said you can either continue, or if you wish you can invalidate the marriage.

That means, the consent of both the male and the female is required

In Islam, a women is considered as a homemaker - She is not considered as a housewife, because she is not married to the house

Many people use terminology, without understanding what it means – 'Housewife' means 'your the wife of the house'

So I believe, from now onwards the sisters would prefer calling themselves 'homemakers', than 'house wives', if they are occupied more in the home

In Islam, a woman, she is not married to a master that she should be treated like a slave - She is married to it is equal

And there is a Hadith which says in Ibn-Hambal - Hadith No 736, 7396.
- It says that… 'the most perfect of the believers are those that are best in character and behavior, and those that are best to their family and their wives'.

Islam gives equal rights to the man and woman and as mentioned by the honorable justice M. M. Kazi, that Qur'an clearly mentions that men and women, husband and wife have equal rights in all aspects, except leadership in the family.

It is mentioned in the Qur'an in Surah Baqarah Ch.2, Verse No.228.
- It says that… 'the women have been given rights similar

against them on equitable terms but the men have a degree higher'

And I perfectly agree with Justice M.M. Kazi when he said that most of the Muslims have misunderstood this verse, when it says 'a men have a degree higher' - As I said we should analyze the Qur'an as a whole.

And its mentioned in Surah Nisa, Ch. 4, Verse No.34 which says - (Arabic...).

'The men are the protectors and maintainers of the women, for Allah (SWT) has given one of them more strength than the other and they give them their means'

People say the word 'Kawwam' means, 'one degree higher in superiority' - But actually the word 'Kawwam' comes from the root word 'Ikamah'

'Ikamah' means for example 'when you give the Ikamah before prayers - You stand up'.

So 'Ikamah' means to standup - so the word 'Kawwam' means one degree higher in responsibility, not one degree higher in superiority.

Even if you read the commentary of 'Ibne-Kathir' - He says that the word 'Kawwam' means one degree higher in responsibility, not one degree higher in superiority.

And this responsibility, should be carried out by mutual consent of both husband and wife.

It is mentioned in Surah Baqarah, Ch.2, Verse No.187, which says - (Arabic)

Which means... 'Your wives are your garments, and you are their garments'

What’s the objective of garments - It is used to conceal and to beautify

The husband and wife, should conceal each others faults, and they should beautify each other - Its a relationship of hands and gloves

The Qur’an mentions that… ‘even if you do not like your wife, you should treat her kindly’.

It is mentioned in Surah Nisa, Ch.4, Verse No.19, that… ‘Treat your wives on a footing of equity and kindness even if you dislike her - For you may be disliking a thing for which Allah has made good for you’.

Even if you dislike your wife you have to treat her kindly and with equity

Just because the rights of a wife are equal to those of the husband in Islam, will you call such rights in Islam as modernizing or outdated?

Let us analyze the rights of a Mother

The only thing above respect to Mother, is the worship of Allah (SWT) - It is mentioned in Ch.17, Verse No.28-29

It says that… ‘Allah has ordained for you - that Allah has ordained for you, that you worship none but Him, and to be kind to our parents

And if any one or both of them reach old age do not say a word of contempt or repel them but address them with honour, and speak to them with kindness, and lower your wing of humility and pray to Allah (SWT) -‘My Lord, bless them as they have cherished me in childhood’

Surah Nisa, Ch. No. 4, Verse No. 1 says… ‘Respect the womb that bore you’.

Surah A’nam, Ch.6, Verse No.151, says… (Arabic)…

That… ‘You have to be kind to your parents’.

Again in Surah Luqman Ch.31, Verse No.14

It again says the same thing that… (Arabic)…

‘We have enjoined on the human beings to be kind to his parents

In travail upon travail, did their mother bore them and in years twain was their weaning’

A similar thing is repeated again in Surah Ahqaf, Ch.46, Verse No.15

(Arabic…).

That… ‘We have enjoined on the human beings to be kind to his parents

In pain did their mother bore them and in pain did she give them birth’.

According to a Hadith related in ‘Ahmed’, as well as in ‘Ibn-e-Majah’ - It says ‘Paradise lies at the feet of the mother’.

That does not mean that if my mother is walking on the road and if she steps on muck and filth - that thing becomes Paradise

It means that after you fulfill your basic duties, if you respect your mother, if you are kind to your mother, If you are honorable to your mother, you will Inshaallah enter Paradise.

Another Hadith related in Sahih Bukhari in Volume 8, Ch. No. 2 Hadith No. 2, as well as in Sahih-Muslim - It says that a man asked the Prophet… ‘Who requires the maximum love and respect and my companionship in this world?

The Prophet replied – ‘your mother’

‘Who is next’? – ‘your mother’

‘Who is next?’ – ‘your mother’

The man asked for the fourth time, - ‘Who is next’

The Prophet replied ‘your father’

75% of the love and respect goes to the father, sorry goes to the mother and 25% of the love and respect goes to the father

Three fourth of the better part of the love and respect goes to the mother – One fourth of the remaining part of the love and respect goes to the father

In short, the gold medal goes to the mother, the silver medal goes to the mother, the bronze medal goes to the mother and the father may be he gets the consolation prize.

I am very happy that my brothers have appreciated it - Otherwise normally I always apologize, that if I have hurt the feelings of my brothers, I am sorry – That is what Islam tells me

But, I’m glad, that my brothers here, they have appreciated Islam,
Al-hamdullillah

Let us analyze the rights of the sisters in Islam

According to Surah Tawbah, Ch. 9, Verse No.71, it says... (Arabic)...

That... ‘The men and the women they are maintainers and supporters of each other’

The word ‘Auliya’ here means ‘supporters’ and ‘maintainers’ - they are supporters and maintainers of each other

In short they are brothers and sisters unto each other, unless otherwise

Prophet Muhammed (may peace be upon him) he said, ‘The women are the ‘Shakat’ -‘Shakat’ means sister’

It also means ‘half’, as humankind has been divided into two halves - men and women - It refers to as ‘half’, also as ‘sisters’

There are so many social rights that we can, that we can speak for weeks together.
*** 07 Sec

But due to short of time, I will not be able to touch on the important topics such as Polygamy, such as divorce, such as Talaq, divorce, because I have opted to spend more time on the other topics

Because experience tells me that these topics, Inshallah, will be covered in the question and answer time

And I hope you will ask questions and whatever - whatever clarification you require on this topic, I will try my level best to give you

Now let us analyze - now let us analyze the Educational rights given to the women in Islam

The first 5 verses which were revealed of the Qur’an Shareef were from Surah Alaq, or Surah Iqra, Ch. 96, Verse No. 1 to 5 which says - (Arabic...)

‘Read, recite or proclaim in the name of thy lord, (Arabic...) Who has created the human beings from a congealed clot of blood, a leech like substance

(Arabic...) - Read, thy Lord is most bountiful

(Arabic...) - Who has taught the use of the pen

(Arabic...) - Who has taught the human beings that which he knew-not'.

The first guidance given in the Qur'an Shareef to the humankind was not to pray, was not to fast, was not to give charity - It was read - Islam pays utmost importance to education.

The Prophet ordained the parents, the father and the mother, to see to it that they gave Religious education to their daughter

And after a lady married, it was the duty of the husband to provide her with the Religious education

If he couldn't do it himself, and if she wanted, he should allow her to go somewhere else to acquire the education

According to Sahih Bukhari, the women were very enthusiastic to acquire knowledge, and they once told the Prophet... 'You are usually surrounded by men - why do not you give us one particular day so that we too can ask you questions' - And the Prophet agreed.

Beside he himself going, he sent many other of his Sahabas to the women, to give them education

Imagine, 1400 years ago, when the women were ill treated and were only used as chattels - leave aside being educated, Islam asked the women to be educated

We have examples of several Muslim women who are scholars

And the best example I can give you is of Bibi Ayaisha (may Allah be pleased with her), who was the daughter of Hazrat Abubaker, the first Khalifa of Islam, (may Allah be pleased with him), and the wife of our beloved Prophet Muhammed (may peace be upon him)

She gave guidance even to the Sahabas and to the Khalifas - One

of her famous student Urwah-Ibn-Zubair

She said that… 'I have not seen a greater scholar than Ayaisha in the field of learning of the Qur'an, in obligatory duties, in lawful and unlawful matters, in literature and poetry, in Arab history'

She was not only expert in the Religious field, she had profound knowledge of medicine - Whenever the foreign delegates came to the Prophet and discussed, she used to memorize the remedies

She was well versed in the field of math, and many times the companions came to her to ask problems of 'Mirath' that is, 'Inheritance' - And how much share could be divide how much share should be given to the each individual

She has - she is said to have guided all the four Khalifas, including the companions.

And she also gave guidance, many a times to Abu Huraira (may Allah be pleased with him) and she herself has narrated 2210 Hadiths.

According to AbuUmm... according to Abu Moosa, who was a famous Jurist, he said that… 'Whenever we companions had lack of knowledge on a matter, we went to - we went to - Hazrat Ayaisha (May Allah be pleased with her), and definitely she had knowledge about it'.

She is said to have taught more than 88 scholars - In short, she was a scholar of the scholars.

There are several examples, even of Safiya (may Allah be pleased with her) who was the wife of the Prophet, who was an expert on Fiqah Islamic Jurisprudence.

And according to Imam an Nouvi 'She was the most intellectual women of that time'.

Another example is Umme - Salma (may Allah be pleased with her) who was the wife of the beloved Prophet

According to Ibn Hajar… 'She has taught 32 different scholars'.

There are several examples - Fatima-Binte-Kais, she is said to have a discussion on Fiqh, for a full day with Hazrat Ayaisha and Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with them both), and still they could not prove her wrong

According to Imam an Nauvi, 'she migrated in the early days and she had profound knowledge'

Other examples like Umme Salim, who was the mother of Anas - she is said to be very well versed in the field of Dawah.

Other examples are Saeeda Nafisa, who was the grand daughter of Hasan and she also said to have taught Imam Shafi, who was the founder of the one of schools of thought.

There are several examples - Even Umme-Ad-darda, who was the wife of Abul -Ad-darda, she is said be an expert in science

And even Imam Bukhari has said that she was an expert in her field - You can give several examples

At the time when the women were ill treated, at the time when women were buried alive, when they were born, at that time Islam had women scholars, in the field of medicine, in the field of science, in the field of Religion

Because Islam tells that every woman should be educated, - Will you call such women's right's in Islam as modernizing or oudated?

Let us discuss the legal rights given to a woman in Islam

According to the Islamic law, men and women are equal - The

Shariah protects the life and property of a man and woman both.

If a man murders a woman he too will receive the 'Hurth' punishment – That is Capital punishment of 'Kisas'

According to Surah Baqarah Ch. 2, Verse No.178 and 179, 'he too shall be killed'.

Like wise if a woman murders, she too will be killed

According to the Islamic law of 'Kisas', men and women - irrespective the injury be of the eye, of the nose, of the ear, of the body - both receive equal punishment

And if the guardian of the murderer, even it be a woman - If she says, that forgive the murderer and she accepts 'Dia', that is compensation - her opinion cannot be rejected - They have to accept it

And if there's difference of opinion between the relatives of the person whose murdered - And some say that the murderer should be killed and some say that he should be forgiven and 'Dia' should be accepted - people should prevent the relatives from killing that murderer.

And irrespective whether the witness or the opinion is given by a man or woman, it has same weight.

According to Surah Maida, Ch.5, Verse No.30 - It says... 'As to the thief, whether he be man or a woman, cut off his or her hand as a punishment for his crime, an example from Allah (SWT)'.

Means, if a person robs, irrespective whether he is a man or a woman his or her hands should be chopped - The punishment is the same

According to Surah Nur, Ch.24, Verse No.2, it says 'If any commits fornication, be it a man or a woman, flog them with 100

stripes’

The punishment for fornication in Islam irrespective whether it is a man or a woman, it is the same - Flogging with 100 stripes.

The punishment for men and women, is the same in Islam.

In Islam a woman is allowed to give witness

Imagine, Islam gave right to a woman to be a witness, 14 centuries ago

Even now in as late as 1980, the Jewish Rabai, they are considering, they were considering that whether the women should be given a right to act as a witness or not - And Islam gave that right 1400 years ago

According to Surah Nur, Ch.24, Verse No.4, it is said ‘If any of you put a charge against the chastity of a woman, produce 4 witnesses, and if they falter, flog them with 80 stripes’

In Islam for a small crime, you require 2 witness - for a big crime you require 4 witnesses

Accusing a woman falsely is a big crime in Islam, therefore you require 4 witnesses.

Now a days you see in the modern society, you find men abusing women and calling them all sorts of name. They call them prostitutes etc, and what nothing is done

In a Islamic State, if a man calls her a ‘prostitute’ in public or anywhere else, and if she takes that man to court - And if that man cannot produce 4 witnesses or even if he produces 4 witnesses and any one of them falter, all of them will receive 80 lashes each, and in future all their evidence will be rejected

Islam gives utmost importance to the chastity of the woman

When a lady marries, she normally adopts the name of her husband

In Islam she has the option of either keeping her husband's name, either adopting the name of the husband, or maintaining her maiden name

And maintaining the maiden name is recommended in Islam - And we find in several Muslim societies that women, even after they get married they maintain their maiden name, because according to the Islamic law men and women are equal

Will you call such rights in Islam modernizing or oudated?

Let us analyze the political rights

According to Surah Tawba, Ch.9, Verse No.71, which I quoted earlier, which says.

(Arabic...).

Which says... 'The men and the women they are supporters of each other'. *** 06 Sec

Supporters not only Socially - even Politically – Politically, men and women should support each other

Islam gives women the right to vote

If you read Surah Al Mumtahina, Ch.60, Verse No.12, it says that... 'O Prophet when the believing women come to thee with an oath of fealty'.

Here, the Arabic word is 'Bayan' - And 'Bayan' means much more than our modern, present day election, - because Prophet Muhammed (may peace be upon him), he was not only the messenger of Allah, but he was also the head of the state

And women came to the Prophet and they agreed with him being

the head of the state.

So Islam gives the woman even the right to vote

Women can even take part in law making

And according to the famous Hadith in which Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him), he was discussing with the Sahabas, and considering putting an upper limit on the 'Meher ', since young men were discouraged from getting married - a lady from the back seat she objected and said When the Qur'an says in Surah Nisa Ch.4, Verse No.20 that… 'you can even give a heap of treasure, a heap of gold in 'Meher', when Qur'an puts no limit on 'Meher', who is Umar to put a limit (may Allah be pleased with him)

And immediately Hazrat Umar (may Allah be pleased with him) he said… 'Umar is wrong and the lady is right'

Imagine, she was a common lady - If it would have been a famous lady, the name of the lady would be mentioned in the Hadith

Since the Hadith does not mention the name of the lady, we can understand that the lady was a common lady

Means, even a common lady can object to the 'Khalifa', the head of the state

And in technical terms it would be called that – 'she is objecting to the breach of the constitution',- because Qur'an is the constitution of the Muslims - That means a woman can even take part in law making

Women have even taken part in the battle fields

There is a full chapter in the Sahih Bukhari mentioning women in the battle field - Women gave water - they give first aid to the

soldiers

And there is a particular mention of a woman by the name of Nasiba, who were among the few, who protected our beloved Prophet during the battle of Ohud

Because the Qur'an says 'Man is the protector of the 'Woman'

Under normal circumstances, the women should not go to the battle field. It is the duty of the man

Only when required, under necessity are women allowed - and they should go to the battle field - Otherwise no

Otherwise you'll have the same position as you are having in the USA.

There... women were allowed to join the battle since 1901 but they were not allowed to take active part - They only played the part of a nurse

Later on after the 'Feminist Movement' had started in 1973, the 'Feminist movement' demanded – 'Why aren't women allowed to take active part in the battle field?'

So the American government allowed - After 1976 women, were allowed to take active part in the battle field

And last year according to a report of the defense department, of the defense department of America, which was released on the 23rd of April, 1993 it said that - '90 people were sexually assaulted in a convention, of out which out of which 83 were women and 117 officers were charged with in disciplinary action' - Imagine in one convention only, 83 women sexually assaulted.

What was the crime of those 117 officers?

They made the women run and they snatched at their clothes -

They made them parade absolutely nude without even covering the genital parts - They were made to have sex in public

Is this what you call ‘Women’s rights’?

If you think that this is what is ‘Women’s right’, then you can keep your rights to yourselves

We do not want our sisters, our daughters our mothers to be sexually assaulted.

And there was a uproar in the parliament and the President, Bill Clinton - he himself had to apologize - publicly apologize and he said… ‘Necessary action will be taken’

And you know when politicians say ‘necessary action will be taken, what happens.

So Islam allows women to take part in the battle field only when required

But there also they should maintain their Islamic Hijab and the Islamic ethics, and their modesty.

Before I conclude my talk, I’d like to give an example

As I said in the beginning of my talk, Islam believes in equality between men and women - Equality does not mean identicality.

Suppose in a classroom 2 students, student ‘A’ and ‘B’, during an examination both come out first - Both secure 80% marks - 80 out of 100

Out of the hundreds of students, 2 come out first ‘A’ and ‘B’

When you analyze the question paper, the question paper has 10 different questions, each carrying 10 marks.

In question 1 student ‘A’ got 9 out of 10, and student ‘B’ got 7

out of 10 - So in question 1 student ‘A’ was higher than student ‘B’.

In question 2, student ‘A’ got 7 out of 10 and student ‘B’ got 9 out of 10,
- Student ‘B’ was higher than student ‘A’ in question number 2.

In question 3 both of them got 8 out of 10, both were equal

So when we add up the marks of all the ten questions, both student ‘A’ and ‘B’ got 80 out of 100

So in short, student ‘A’ and student ‘B’ are over all equal

In some question ‘A’ is higher than ‘B’, in some question ‘B’ is higher than ‘A’, in others both are equal

In the same fashion, taking the example that since Allah has given man more strength - Suppose a thief enters the house will you tell, ‘I believe in women’s rights - I believe in women’s rights’ - will you tell your mother, your sister and your daughter, to go and fight the thief?’

No, but natural you’ll fight him - If required they may interfere - under normal circumstances since Allah has given you more physical strength, you have to go and tackle the thief.

So here, in physical strength, man is one degree higher than the woman

Let us take another example where... where it comes to giving respect to the -where it comes to respecting the parents - The children are supposed to respect the mother 3 times more than the father.

Here the women have one degree higher than the men - Over all both equal

So Islam believes in equality, not identically - Men and women

are over all equal in Islam. *** 09 Sec

‘This was in brief, not in detail’, as Justice Kazi said, time does not permit me to speak in detail - this was in brief, the highlights, of ‘the Women’s Rights in Islam’.

After this what the Muslim society did is different - Many of the Muslim societies did not give the women their rights and they deviated away from the Qur’an and the Sunnah.

The Western society is largely responsible for this - because of the Western societies, many Muslim societies have become over protective, over precautions and have gone to one extreme and deviated away from the Qur’an and the Sunnah.B

On the other extreme, some of the Muslim societies upgrade with the Western culture, and followed their culture.

I want to tell the Western society that if you analyze the women’s rights in Islam according to the Qur’an and the Sunnah - you will realize it is modernizing and not outdated

Lastly, I would like to thank those people who have helped and supported me

If there is any one person who requires credit for me being here, it is my... it is my beloved mother Mrs. Roshan Naik - It was because, it was because of her love, care and guidance that I am here today.

I will be doing injustice if I do not include the name of my father Dr. Abdul Karim Naik, as well as my other family members, specially, my Brother Mohammed Naik

And last, but not the least my wife, who has encouraged me since one and a quarter year, since we have been married and thus I have been able to strive harder in this field.
*** 15 Sec

Wa aakhirudda-waana Anilhamdulillahi Rabbil Aalamin

Clapping

(Dr. Mohammed)

A thank you all for that appreciation

Before we start the question and answer session, an announcement to make.

We, the Islamic Research Foundation and it's trustees are very thankful to the Al-Baraka Finance House Ltd. Bombay and it's managing director Mr. Raashid Umar for kindly sponsoring the U-matic video recording of broadcast quality, of this programme which is going on - Thank you Mr Raashid Umer and the Al-Baraka.

(Clippings of Question & Answer)

(Q). Asalam Allakum, my name is Sabha, and I am a student.

I would ask... I would like to ask you a question Zakir Bhai - A man will have 'Hoors', that is, beautiful maidens when he when he enters Paradise

What will a woman get, when she enters Paradise?

(Q). My name is Sheila - I would like... I would like to ask - Why is Polygamy permitted in Islam, and that is why... is a man allowed to marry more than one wife?

(Dr. Zakir). Qur'an happens to be the only Religious book on the face of the earth, which says... 'Marry only one'.

There is no Religious book on the face of the earth, which says... 'Marry only one'.

You read the Geeta, you read the Veda, you read the Ramayan, you read the Mahabharata, you read the Bible - No where it is mentioned… 'Marry only one' – It is only mentioned in the Qur'an

(Q). I am Vimla Dalal, Advocate - I would like to ask, that Islam preaches women's rights are equal to men.

Why women should be in 'Purdah', and why there should be a segregation of men and women, in this sort of meeting also?

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question

(Q). Aslam Allaikum - My name is Bilal Lala, and I am a revert - By profession, I happen to be a lecturer in computers

There is one question which has baffled me over the years, and that question is -Why does Islam permit a Muslim man to marry a woman of his choice from Ahle Kitab… may be Jews or Christians, and the vice-versa is not permitted?

(Q). My name is Roshan Rangwala… a businessman.

Question is Dr. Naik, as you said that Islam gives equal right to both ladies and gents - Then why man is allowed to keep 4 wives, and ladies are kept away from this privilege?

As men can think of another woman, at the same time after marrying a one wife… man can think for another women - why ladies cannot think for another?

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question please…..

(Q). I am Prakash Lote - first of all I will thank organisation for calling people of all faiths… and so I am asking another question.

For all the Religions, whether it is Hinduism, Christian, or Islam… in books there are many good things.

But for years, after thousands of years, the practices of all the Religion have been discriminatory towards women, and no Religion is a exception to this.

So the question is - What is written in the books… whether it is Bible, Qur'an or Gita or whatever it is… whether that is more important, or the practice of the society, which is more important?

And if practice is more important, then we should give very little importance to what is being written in all such holy books, including Qur'an, Gita whatever it is

So on this, I will expect answer, where in practice what could be done… instead of saying what is being written in this book or that book.*** Sec

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question from the top please

(Q). As salam Allaikum, I am Saima Kadri, and my question is that… 'Why there are no women Prophets in Islam?'

(Dr. Mohammed) This is from Bijay, from IIT Powai Bombay.

He asks… 'Islam does not allow intermingling of sex in work place - Is this modernizing or oudated - Please explain?'

(Q). Another connected question is… 'Can a woman work as an Airhostess, since it is a decent and highly paid job?' - This is from Sudat.

(Dr. Zakir). According to statistics, it tells us that 50% of the women in America who go to universities and work places, are raped - Do you know that? .

50% - why?… Because most of the jobs in America, involve intermingling of sexes.

If you think that a lady should be raped, it is modernising… then

Islam is oudated - If you think not, then Islam is the most modernizing.

(Q). In the name of Allah most Gracious, Merciful and Bountiful.

As-Salam-Alaikum - I am Parveen Alaviya… a practicing lawyer, and a researcher in world Religions.

My question to you Dr. Naik is… you mentioned the solitary illustration of a woman, who told the body, that she was forced into a marriage, and her marriage was allowed to be invalidated.

This incident took place years ago, around the year, if possible the body.

Qur'an is the constitution of the rights of women and men - Is there a body? If so name it, which also enforces the breakage and rights - Thank you.

(Dr. Mohammed). The next question from the chit.

(Q). Is co-education allowed in Islam? - This is from Rasheed Shaikh… he is a student.

Is co-education allowed in Islam?.

(Q). This is from Jenifer - It says… ‘Is it only the husband who can say ‘Triple Talak’ and get one… and get one? - What has a woman to do, if she wants to get divorce or ‘Talak’?’

(Dr. Zakir). The question asked is - Why are not women allowed in the Mosque?

You go to Saudi Arabia, women are allowed in the Mosque - You go to London, women are allowed in the Mosque - You go to America, women are allowed in the Mosque – It is only in India, that they are prevented, and a few countries close by.

You go to the Haram-Sharif in Mecca, in Masjid-E-Nabvi, they are

allowed.

But Alhamdulilah, there are few Mosques in India… even in Bombay, which have started allowing women in the Mosque - Hope the other Mosques will follow.

(Dr. Mohammed). Thank you - the next question.

(Q). Dr. Naik, my question is… 'For last fourteen hundred years... One thousand and four hundred years, only main Ulemas have interpreted Qur'an and Hadith.

Of course, I was enlightened by your speech in the beginning, that Aaisha Ji was a Religious scholar, and she used to interpret.

My question is… how many women, female Ulemas or Religious scholars are today to interpret Qur'an and Hadith, today – How many?… What is the percentage? - And another thing another thing, I am just… I am finishing… this question arises from 'the Taslima of Bengal' - that when she made a sentence, I mean, Moulvi started shouting - there was not a lady Ulema to, I mean reply to these Moulvis or take the side of Taslima or anything.

We have not read what Taslima has said, because we can not get all the literature here in India - either from Pakistan or from Bengal or anywhere.

(Dr. Zakir). Why did not any lady support the cause for Taslima Nasreen? - The first question arises… Should she be supported?

Regarding the answer for the question on Taslima Nasreen, this cassette is available outside in the foyer.

This cassette… we had a debate in the Bombay Union of Journalist - Bombay Union of Journalist had a debate between myself and Dr. Vyas and Father Peirera as well as Ashok Shahani, who translated into Marathi 'Lajja'.

And many people objected, many people guided me, that do not

go to that debate… It will be a problem, they will misquote you - And believe me, I have had two minds.

But finally my father guided me… ‘Take the name of Allah and go’, and I went…Al-Hamdulillah.

Al-Hamdulillah, it was only because of Allah's support, that the debate was successful - It was so successful, that not a single paper reported it… you know that - Not a single paper reported it… you know that? – Not a single paper.

(Back Ground Azaan, By Brother Yusuf Islam)

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(Azan Continued….).*** 05 Sec

WOMENS' RIGHTS IN ISLAM -MODERNISING OR OUTDATED? – PART 2

(Back Ground Azaan, By Brother Yusuf Islam)

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(Azan Continued)…

(Dr. Mohammed) *Bismillah.* Now we would be having the Question and Answer session. We would like you to kindly understand and observe the rules, that have to be followed, during the Question and Answer session, so that we can derive the maximum benefit from it. 3 mikes have been provided for the questions from the audience, two down here, below for the gents, and one up in the centre, in the balcony for the ladies. One question at a time will be put on the mike - the first question being asked by the lady on the top, then we move down to the brother on my right hand side, then we move up again to the next lady in the balcony - We move down on my left hand side, to the next brother here, and similar fashion we move up and down in the centre, on the top, and on the two sides, below. Written questions on slip papers, which are available from volunteers standing in the aisles, will be given a 2nd preference, after the questions on the mikes have been answered by Dr. Zakir. Questions asked, should be on the topic 'Women's Right in Islam - Modernising or Outdated?', only. Kindly state you question briefly and to the

point, preferably in one to three sentences - This is a question and answer session, not a lecture or a debate session. Only one question at a time may be asked - If time permits us we may allow you a second chance after the others have completed their chance. In the interest of having a less time wasting, a more educative and an interesting Question and Answer session, our decision to allow or disallow irrelevant questions, or time wasting questions, will be final. In the interest of eliciting a proper and clear answer from our speaker, kindly state your name and designation, before putting forward your question - Your name and designation, before you put forward your question, so that we can give you a more appropriate answer - Thank you. We start our Question and Answer session - Dr. Zakir Naik ready at his mike, the questioners ready at theirs - May we have the first question, from the ladies in the balcony.

(Q) *Salam Alaikum*, my name is Saba, and I am a student - I would ask, I would like to ask you a question, Zakir Bhai. A man will have *'Hoors'*, that is beautiful maidens when he enters *Paradise* - What will a woman get when she enters *Paradise*?

(Dr. Zakir) The sister has posed a question, that when a man enters *Paradise*, he will get '*Hoor*'... that is a beautiful maiden - What will the woman get, when she enters *Paradise*? The *Qur'an* has mentioned the word '*Hoor*', in no less than 4 diffrent places. It is mentioned in Surah Dukhan, Ch. No. 44, Verse No. 54, it is mentioned Surah Tur, in Ch. No. 52, Verse No. 20, it is mentioned in Surah Rehman, Ch. No. 55, Verse No. 72, as well as in Surah Waqia, Ch. No.56, Verse No. 22, and many of the translations, specially the *Urdu* translations have translated the word '*Hoor*', as beautiful maiden. If the word '*Hoor*', means a beautiful maiden... it means a beautiful maiden, then what will the woman get, in *Paradise*? Actually the word '*Hoor*', is a plural for *'Ahwar'*, which is applicable to the man, and *'Hawar'*, which is applicable to the women. And it signifies the characteristic of *'Hawar'*, which means 'big, white beautiful eye', and describes especially, the whiteness of the eye. The similar thing is mentioned as *'Azwajur Muthaharin'* in many places in the *Qur'an,* in Surah Baqrah, Ch. No. 2, Verse No. 25, and in Surah Nisa, Ch. No. 4, Verse No. 57 - It says... *'Azwajur Muthaharin'*, which means companion, pair. So the word '*Hoor*', is rightly translated by Mohammed Asad as... *'Spouse'* and also by Abdullah Yusuf Ali... Abdullah Yusuf Ali as... *'Companion'* - So '*Hoor*' actually means a *'Companion'* or a *'Spouse'* - It has no gender. For the man, he will get a good lady with big beautiful eyes - and for a woman, she will get a good man with big beautiful eyes. I hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) The brother on my right hand side, please.

(Q) *As-Salam-Alaikum* - Sultan Kazi, I am in service - I would like to pose a certain question to Dr Zakir Naik. For evidence… given to prove evidence, why are there two female witness, against one male witness?

(Dr. Zakir) The brother asked a very important question, that why are 2 women witness, equal to one witness, in Islam. 2 women witnesses are not equal to one man witness - 2 women witness are not equal to one man witness, in all the cases - only in certain cases. There are at least 5 Verses in the *Qur'an*, which speak about the witnesses, without specifying male or female **-** In one place there is an indication, in which two women witnesses is equal to one witness of man, and that is in Surah Baqarah, Ch. No. 2, Verse No. 282, which happens to be the longest Verse of the *Qur'an*. It says that... 'When you involve in financial transaction, in which future obligations are there, reduce them in writing, and take 2 witnesses among the men'. If can not… sorry… if you can not find 2 men witnesses, take one man, and 2 women, so that if one of them gets confused, the other will remind her - This Verse of the *Qur'an*, Surah Baqrah, Ch. No. 2, Verse No. 282, only deals with financial aspects. Only in financial aspects, it is said that take 2 men as witnesses, preferable - only if you can not find 2 men as witnesses, take one man, and 2 women. Let me give you an example, for a better understanding - Suppose a person wants to undergo a surgery, he wants to go under an operation… but natural he would prefer taking the advice of 2 qualified surgeons. If he cannot find 2 qualified surgeons, he would take the advice of one qualified surgeon, at least backed with 2 normal general practitioners, who have got a normal M.B.B.S. degree, because a surgeon is more qualified in the filed of surgery, as compared to a plain M.B.B.S. doctor. In the same fashion, since the responsibility of the financial aspects, has been laid on the shoulders of the man, in Islam… he is more well Versed in finance, as compared to the women - That is why the best option for witnesses in financial transactions, is 2 men. If you can not find 2 men, then one woman… sorry, one man and 2 women. Again, if you read in Surah Maidah, Ch. No. 5, Verse No. 106, it says that... 'Anyone writes a will of inheritance, take two men as witnesses' - Again dealing with financial transactions, men are preferred. Some of the Jurists say that… 'Even while giving witnesses in cases of murder, the feminine nature may obstruct her, and she may get scared in cases of murder - That is why even in cases of murders, 2 women witness are equal to one witness of man. Only under these 2 conditions… of finance and cases of murder, are two women witness, equal to one. Some of the scholars say, "No, Islam says, one place in Surah Baqrah, Ch. No. 2, Verse No. 282, that… ***'Two women equal to one man'*** - Therefore under all circumstances 2 women is always equal to one man". Let us analyse… as I said let us analyse the *Qur'an* as a whole. If you read the *Qur'an*, in Surah Nur, Ch. No. 24, Verse No. 6, it states that… ***'If any of you put a charge against your spouse, and if they have no evidence, if they have no evidence, their solitary evidence is sufficient'.***

Means, if a husband wants to put a charge against the wife, the wife has to put a charge against the husband - if they have got no witnesses, their solitary evidence is sufficient. This Verse clearly indicates that one woman witness, is equal to one witness of man. There are several cases, which the Jurists agree that even in cases of sighting of moon, one woman witness is sufficient. Some Jurists say that… 'In the beginning of *Ramzan*, one witness is required - At the end of *Ramzan*, two witnesses are required - It does not make a difference, whether they are man or woman. There are certain cases in which man's witness cannot be accepted… only woman's witness is accepted. All are waiting for the answer, I believe. Suppose you want to give a witness for the burial bath of a woman - After a woman dies, the witness for a burial bath, can only be given by a woman. And only in extreme cases, when you cannot find women, then can the husband give, the witness - so here the woman witness is preferable - Hope that clarifies your doubt, brother.

(Dr. Mohammed) One… those who are interested in writing questions on the slip, you may kindly raise your hands, so that we have assistants standing around.

(Q). They could come and help you out with a slip of paper, or a pen, or whatever is required, so that… and it can be passed on down the stage side, to me - So we can carry on as a secondary preference, later on. May we have the next question, from the sister on the top, please.

(Q). *As-salaam Alaikum*, my name is Shaila - I would like… I would like to ask, why is *Polygamy* permitted in Islam - and that is why, a man is allowed to marry more than one wife?

(Dr.Zakir) Sister has asked the question, that why is *Polygamy* permitted in Islam, that is why… is a man is allowed to marry more than one wife, in Islam. The *Polygamy* actually means that… 'A person who has more than one Spouse'. It is divided into two categories – '*Polygeny*'… in which, a man has more than one wife, and *'Polyendry'*… in which, a woman has got more than one husband. People normally, think *Polygamy* means… 'A man can only… man can marry more than one wife' - *Polygamy* means both… 'A person having more than one spouse'. If a man has more than one wife, it's called '*Polygeny*'… and if a woman has more than one husband, it is called *'Polyendry'*. But since the sister has mainly asked the question… 'Why is a man allowed to marry more than one wife?' I will answer, why is *Polygeny* allowed in Islam. *Qur'an* happens to be the only Religious book on the face of the earth, which says… 'Marry only one'. There is no Religious book on the face of the earth, which says… 'Marry only one'.
You read the *Geeta*, you read the *Veda*, you read the *Ramayana*, you read the *Mahabharta*, you read the *Bible* - No where it is mentioned… 'Marry only one' - Its only mentioned in the *Qur'an*. In fact if you read the Hindu Scriptures, most of the

kings... most of the kings had several wives - King Dashrat had more than one wife, Lord Krishna had several wives. If you read the Jewish Scriptures, the Jewish law allowed '*Polygeny*' in the 11th century. It was only when Rabi Gurdshom Benjahuda, he passed a Signord and said... '*Polygeny* should not be allowed'. Still, it was practiced by the Septranic Jewish community, in the Muslim countries... until in 1950, the chief Rabainite of Israel, put a ban on it. The Christian *Bible* allows *Polygeny* - only a couple of centuries ago, the Church put a ban on it. Even if you analyse the legal aspect of India, the Indian law allowed a Hindu man to have more than one wife. It was only in 1954, when the Hindu Marriage Act was passed, and if I am wrong Justice Kazi can correct me - When the Hindu marriage Act was passed in 1954, which put a ban, and prohibited the Hindu man to marry more than one wife. If you see the statistics, according to a committee report on 'The status of women in Islam', which was published in 1975, on page No. 66 and 67, it states the percentage of *Polygamous* marriages. And it said that... 'The percentage in which the Hindus did *Polygenous* marriages, it was 5.06, and the percentage of Muslim *Polygenous* marriages, was only 4.31'. Let us leave the statistics, aside... let us come to the main point - why did Islam allow *Polygeny*? As I mentioned earlier, *Qur'an* is the only Religious book on the face of the earth which says... 'Marry only one'. It is mentioned in Surah Nisa, Ch. No. 4, Verse No. 3, that... ***'You can marry women of your choice, in twos, threes or fours, but if you can not do justice, marry only one'.*** This statement... 'Marry only one', is only given in the *Qur'an* - it is not there in any other Religious books. In pre-Islamic Arabia, men had several wives... Some people had hundreds of wives. Islam put an upper limit to *Polygamy* - Maximum four. And if you can have more than one wife, only on the condition, that you can do equal justice between the two, or between the three, or four - otherwise only one. And the same Surah... Surah Nisa, Ch. No. 4, Verse No. 129, says that..., ***'It is very difficult for a man to be just, between his wives'.*** So *Polygamy* is an exception... it is not the rule - Many people think that Islam says..., you should compulsory marry more than one wife. There are five categories of *do's* and *don'ts*, in Islam. 1st category is compulsory, which is '*Farz'*, the 2nd category is '*Recommended'* or '*Encouraged'*, the 3rd category is the '*Permissible*' category, the 4th category is the *'Discouraged'* category, and the last is prohibited or *'Forbidden' – Polygeny*, falls in the middle category of, *'Permissible'*. There is no statement in any *Hadith*, or in the *Qur'an* which says that... 'If a man marries more than one wife, he is a better Muslim than a person who marries only one wife'. Let us analyse logically, why does Islam allow a man, to marry more than one wife? By nature, men and women are born... male and females are born, in equal proportion. But medical science tells us that... 'The fetus... if it's a female, it is more stronger than the male fetus.' Pediatric knowledge tells us, that... a female child has got more resistance, than the male child - A female child can fight germs and disease, much more stronger and a better way, than the male child. *** Medical science tells us, that the female is health wise a stronger sex, than the

male - so in the Pediatric stage itself, the female ratio is higher than the male ratio. Wars take place in the world, and during wars, more males are killed than the female. Even the recent war which took place... in the recent war which took place in Afghanistan, approximately more than one and a half million people were martyred, out of which most of them were men. Statistics tells us that accidents take place - More of the men die in accidents, than female - More male death takes place due to cigarette smoking, than female death. Therefore, we have more females in the world, as compared to the male. India is one of the country, besides the few of the Asian countries, and Africa, in which the female population is more than the male population. And the reason I have given you ... because more than one million fetuses are... female fetuses are being aborted, every year. And because of the high rate of infanticide... female infanticide - that is the reason, that females are less than the male. Otherwise, you stop this evil practice, and within a few decade, you'll have that the male population is... will become much less than the female population. In New York alone, there are 1 million females more than male - In US, alone there are 7.8 million females more than males, and out of the male population of New York, 1/3 are *Gay*. They are *Sodomites* - That means, they can not find female partners - And there are more than 25 million *Gays* in America. In Britain alone, there are more than 4 million females, more than males - In Germany alone there are 5 million females more, than males - In Russia alone, there are 7 million females, more than males - And God knows, how many million females are there more than the males, in this whole world. If suppose my sister happens to live in America, and suppose the market is saturated, every man has found a female partner for himself - Still there will be more than 30 million females in USA alone, who will not be able to find husbands. And suppose my sister who is living in America, happens to be amongst the unfortunate ladies, who has not found a partner yet - The only option remaining for her is, that she either marries a husband... she marries a man who already has a wife, or she becomes public property - There is no third option. And believe me I have posed this question to hundreds of Non-Muslims, and every one opted for the first - No one so far, has opted for the second. But there are some people who are smart, and he said that... 'I would prefer my sister remaining a virgin'. Believe me, medical science tells us, that a man or woman cannot remain a virgin, throughout her life. She cannot remain a virgin, throughout her life, without indulging in illicit sex or sexual perversion, because daily, sex hormones are being liberated in the body. And those great men, who claim to have renounced the world, for example the *Sages* and the *Sants*, who go to mountains and *Himalayas*... behind them, you find the *devadasis* going - for what? According to a report... according to a report... 'Out of the Priests and the Nuns of the Church of England, the majority indulge in fornication and homosexuality' - there is no option... there no third option. The only option is, that you marry a husband who already has a wife, or you become a public property.

(Dr. Mohammed) In continuation… in continuation of that question, we have got a question on the slip.

(Q) Can you enumerate the various conditions in which, '*Polygamy*' is permitted? -
This is from sister Samina Can you enumerate the various conditions in which, '*Polygamy'* is permitted?

(Dr. Zakir) The sister has asked… the sister has asked the question that - can you enumerate the various conditions, in which *Polygeny* is permitted. The only condition which allows a man to marry more than one wife is that, he should do justice between the two wives. If he can do justice between the two or three or four wives that he has, he is allowed to take more than one wife - If he can not do justice he should suffice with only one wife. But there are several conditions, in which it is more advisable for a man to take more than one wife. One of the examples I gave is - because of the surplus women which can not find husbands, Islam has allowed *Polygeny*… to protect the modesty of the women. There are several other conditions - For example, suppose a young lady, she gets married, and within may be… or approximately a few months of her marriage, she has an accident, and she gets handicapped and she cannot satisfy the husband. The only option for the husband is, that he either keeps his first wife, who is handicapped and takes another wife, or divorces the first wife, and marries a new wife. I am telling you, suppose your sister happens to be that unfortunate lady, who gets handicapped - which would you prefer? Would you prefer your brother-in-law to divorce her, and to marry a new wife, or would you prefer your brother-in-law to keep that first wife, and to take another wife? There are situations in which the wife can become seriously ill - She can have a disease in which she will not be able to look after the children, or look after the husband. Under such conditions, it is more advisable that, that wife shares the husband with another lady, who will not only look after the husband… will also look after her, as well as the children. Many people may argue that… 'Why can not you keep a maid servant or a nurse, who will look after the children?' I do agree with you - You can very well keep a maidservant, who will look after your children and your wife - But who will look after you then? Very soon, that maidservant will start looking after you also. So the best option is, that you keep your first wife, and take another wife, and treat both of them equally. There can be conditions such as… after several years of marriage, you have got no children, and may be both the husband and wife, they yearn for the child. The wife can very well give permission to the husband, to marry another wife, and they can have more children. Some people may argue that… 'Why do not you adopt a child?' Islam does not allow adoption, for which there are several reasons, I will not go into. The only option remaining here is, that he either divorces the first wife, and takes another wife, if he wants children - or he keeps

the first, and takes another wife, and treats them both of them equally - I hope these are sufficient reasons.

(Dr. Mohammed) Next question from the brother on the left.

(Q). My name is Iliyas, and I am a student - The question is... the question... the is the question is - Can a woman become the head of the State?

(Dr. Mohammed) A bit louder please.

(Q) Can a woman become the head of the State?

(Dr. Zakir) The brother has asked the question - can a woman become the head of a State? There is no text in the *Qur'an,* which I know, which states that... a woman cannot become a head of the State. But there are several '*Hadiths'* - for example, one *Hadith* says that... *'The people who have their leader as a woman, will not succeed'*. Some of the scholars say that... 'This only refers to particular time, in which this *Hadith* was related, especially at the time when Persia had their leader as a queen'. The other scholars say... 'No if refers to all the times'. Let us analyse, whether it is advisable for a woman, to be a head of a State, or not. If a woman is head of a State, in an Islamic Country, she may have to lead the congregational prayers. And if a woman leads the congregational prayers... in Islam we adopt several postures, like *Kayam, Rukhu, Sujud* - standing, bowing and prostration - If a lady is doing that in front of a gents congregation, I am sure it will cause disturbances in the prayers. If she happens to be head of a State, of a modern society like the one we have today -
Many a time, the head of a State has to have meetings, with other heads of State... which are usually gents. Many a times, they have closed door meetings, in which no one else is allowed, and if a woman has a closed door meeting with another gent... Islam does not permit her to do that. Islam does not permit a woman to be alone with a *'Na-Mehram'*, with 'a foreign male'... in closed doors - Islam does not permit intermingling of sexes. The head of the State, many a times receives over publicity by video shooting, and by photography, and many a times, it involves in close proximity with the other heads of State, and with other gentlemen - Therefore, you can keep photographs of the head of States. If it is the lady... may it be Margret Thacher, or any one else, you find her photographs... shaking her hands with many men - Islam does not allow such free, intermingling of sexes. The heads of the State requires, that it should meet the common man. A lady, if she is head of the State, it will be difficult for her to meet the common man, and try and solve her problems. And science tells us that... 'A woman during her menstrual period, she undergoes certain behavioral, mental and psychological changes, due to the release of the sex hormonestogene'. And these changes, will surely disturb her in making

decisions, if she is the head of the State. Science also tells us that the women have more verbal and... verbal, and vocal skills as compared to the man. And a man has got more... 'Spacialability'. *'Spacialability'* means, 'The Ability to imagine things, to imagine the future, to imagine the future project'. And *'Spacialability',* is very important for the head of the State. A woman has be given an edge over the men, in verbal and vocal skills, which are required for her motherhood. A woman... she may get pregnant, and surely she may require a rest, for a few months. Who will look after the State, for those few months - She may have children ... Her duty as a mother, is very important. And it is more practicable, for a man who can do both the duties ... of a father, as well as head of a State, as compared to a woman ... if she has to do the duty of a mother, as well as of head of the States. So I am more inclined to those scholars, who say that... 'Women should not be made the head of State'. But that does not mean, that women cannot take part in making decisions. As I mentioned in my speech, they have a right to vote, they have a right to take part in law making. During the treaty of *Hudaibia*, Ume-Salma (May Allah be pleased with her), she supported and guided the Prophet, at a time when the whole Muslim community was disturbed - She guided him, and she supported him. As you know, that though the Prime Minister or the President may be the head of the State - but many a times, the PA and the secretary... they are the ones who make the decisions. So surely, a woman can help the man, in making decisions of the States. I hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question.

(Q). I am Vimla Dalal, Advocate - I would like to ask... that Islam preaches women's *rights,* are equal to men. Why women should be in *'Pardah'*, and why there should be a segregation of men and women, in this sort of meeting also?

(Dr. Zakir) Sister has asked a very good question, that when Islam believes in 'Women's Rights', that men and women should be equal... then why does Islam believe in *'Pardah'*- and why should there be segregation of sexes, like the one we are having just now? As I mentioned earlier, Islam does not believe in intermingling of the sexes. Why Islam specifies *'Pardah'*?... I will answer in a short time. And I would like to thank the sister, because I did not have time to speak on the *'Hijab'* of the women. If you read the *Qur'an* - before the mentioning of the *'Hijab'* for the women, the *Qur'an* mentioned the *'Hijab'*, for the man. It is mentioned in Surah Nur, Ch. No. 24, Verse No. 30, it says to the believing man, that... ***'He should lower his gaze and guard his modesty'***. The next Verse... Surah Nur, Ch. 24, Verse No. 31, says... ***'Say to the believing woman, that she should lower her gaze and guard her modesty and display not her beauty, except what is that necessary of, and to draw a head covering over her bosom, except in front of her father, her son, her husband'***, and a big list of

‘Na-Mahram’, the close relatives which she can marry is given, and but natural, in front of the chaste women - Besides these, she should maintain the *Hijab*. The criteria for *Hijab* in Islam, can be found in the *Qur’an,* and the *Sahih Hadith*. There are six criteria - 1st is extent, which is the only difference between a man and a woman. For the man, he has to be covered from the naval to the knee. For the woman, her complete body should be covered - the only part that can be seen, should not be seen, is the face and the hands up to the wrist. If she wishes to cover them, she is most welcome, but it is not compulsory that she should cover it - Otherwise the full body should be covered. The only part that can been seen… not should not be seen, is the wrist, face and the hands, up to the wrist. This is the only criteria which differs, between the man and the woman. The second criteria is that, the clothes she wears, should not be so tight, that it reveals the figure. The clothes she wears… third point - it should not be so transparent, so that you can see through. And the fourth point - she should not wear glamorous clothes, or he should not wear glamorous clothes, which attracts the opposite sex. The fifth point is that a person should not wear cloth, which resembles that of the opposite sex - like you find men wearing earnings. If you wear one earring, it signifies something else - if you wear two earrings, it signifies something else. It is prohibited in Islam. And the last criteria is, you should not wear clothes which… that resemble of an unbeliever. These are the six basic criteria of *Hijab*, in Islam. Now coming to the question - why then Islam believe in *‘Pardah’*, and why are there segregation of sexes? If let us analyse the society in which there is ‘*Pardah* ’, and society in which there is, ‘No *Pardah* ’. The maximum number of crime that takes place in any country… it is in America. According to a report by the FBI in 1990, in the year 1990… ‘One thousand, two hundred & fifty five women were raped’. These are only the reported cases - And the report says… ‘Only 16% of the cases were reported’. If you want those exact figure, multiply 1,02,555 with 6.25, and you get the answer - more than 6,40,000 ladies were raped in America only in 1990. And if you divide this… by the number of days, divide by 365, you get a figure of One thousand, seven hundred and fifty six women are raped every day, in America, in the year 1990. And the report says... ‘Every day… One thousand, nine hundred ladies are raped’ - May be it is the report of 1991… the Americans got more bold. And the last report which came in Autumn, in 1993, it says... ‘Every 1.3 minute, one woman is raped’ - you know why? America has given the women, more *rights,* and more women are being raped. Only 10 were arrested, 16% are reported - Only 10% are arrested - means only 1.6% of the cases, are arrested. Out of that, 50% are let free before the trial – Means, only 0.8% of the rape cases, are held. Means, if a man rapes One hundred & twenty five ladies, the chances of his being caught, is one. Who would not like to try - One hundred & twenty five ladies you rape, and you get caught only once. Out of that, 50% time you get a punishment of less than 1 year… though the USA law tells you that… ‘For rape, you have got a punishment of life imprisonment’. But they say… ‘It is happened only the first time… he is

caught the first time - Let him give him a chance, and a punishment of less than 1year'. Even in India, according to the National Crime Bureau report, which was… which had come in the papers, in the 1 of December 1992, it said that… 'Every 54 minutes, one case of rape is reported in India… reported *ha*. Every 26 minutes, one case of molestation - every 1 hour 43 minutes, one case of dowry death. If you analyse the total number of cases of rape that are taking in our country, it will be… every couple of minutes, one case of rape. I am asking a simple question - if you ask every lady to do *Hijab*, will the rape case in USA remain the same, will it decrease, or will it increase?. If you apply the *Hijab* for every lady in India, will the rate of rape decrease, will it remain the same, or will it increase? You should understand Islam, as a whole. Even suppose, after that even, after a lady does *Hijab*, irrespective a lady does *Hijab*, or not, a man is commanded… 'He should lower his gaze' - and if suppose after that, if a man commits rape… in Islam, he receives capital punishment - you call it a barbaric law? I have asked this question to several people – Suppose… I have asked this question to many of the gents. Suppose your sister is raped, and if you are made the judge - leave aside what Islam tells you, leave aside what Indian law tells you, leave aside what American law tells you - If you are made the judge, what punishment will you give to the rapist of your sister? And all have said… 'Death sentence' - Few went to the extreme of saying… 'I will torture him to death'. Want to ask you a question… 'If you apply the Islamic *Shariah* law in America, will the rape case decrease, will it remain the same, or will it increase? If you apply the *Shariah* law in India, will the rape case decrease, will it remain the same, or will it increase? So but natural, let us analyse practically. You say you have given women *rights* theoretically… but practically, you are degrading her to a status of a concubine and a mistress. I would like to… I mean only speaking on '*Pardah* '… you can talk for days - Just I would like to… and my answer, by giving a small example. Suppose two ladies… two twin sisters were equally beautiful - if they are walking down the street, and if round the corner there is a hooligan, who is waiting for a catch… who is waiting to tease a girl. Both twin sisters are walking, both are equally beautiful - one is in the *Hijab…* Islamic *Hijab* - one is wearing a mini or a skirt. Which girl will that hooligan tease? … Which girl will he tease? But natural, the one in the short or the mini girl. If a girl is wearing a normal *salwar kameez*, with her head open… may be the *salwar kameez* tight, and the other girl is wearing a Islamic *Hijab* - Which girl will he tease? But natural, the girl who is not in *Hijab*. It is practical proof, that *Hijab* is been ordained in Islam… not to degrade the woman, but to protect her modesty.

(Clapping)…

(Dr. Mohammed) There is an announcement for Aruna Bhurte… your husband is calling you at the entrance - Miss… Mrs. Aruna Bhurte, could you please contact your husband, outside the auditorium - Please, the next question.

(Q). *As-salaam Alaikum* - My name is Bilal Lala, and I am a revert - By profession, I happen to be a lecturer in computers. There is one question which has baffled me over the years, and that question is - Why does Islam permit a Muslim man, to marry woman of his choice, from *Ahle Kitab...* may be Jews or Christians, and the vice-versa is not permitted. Are the Muslim ladies, not *Mushriks* - Can you clarify?

(Dr. Zakir) Brother Bilal has asked the question, that *Qur'an* permits a Muslim man to marry a lady from the *Ahle Kitab*, but the vice-versa is not true - and he is correct. It is mentioned in Surah Mahida, Ch. No. 5, Verse No. 5, that... 'On this day, it has been made lawful for you, all that is good and pure'. 'The food of the people of the Book, has been made lawful for you - and your food has been made lawful for them'. And also besides... the women who are believers, even the women of the *Ahlekitab*, who are chaste, have been made lawful for you. Islam gives permission for a Muslim man, to marry a woman from the *Ahle Kitab* - why? Because, when a Christian or a Jewish lady, when she marries a Muslim man - after she marries... the family of the husband, will not abuse or insult any of her Prophets - because in Islam, we believe in all the Prophets of the Jews and the Christians - what Prophets they believe in, we believe in. We both believe in Adam, in Noah, in David, in Moosa, in Isaa (May peace be upon them all). Because we believe in all of their Prophets... the lady, when she enters a Muslim family, she will not be ridiculed. But the vice-versa - if a Muslim lady goes to a family of a Christian or a Jew... but natural, they do not believe in Prophet Muhammed (May peace be upon him), and she will be ridiculed. That is why, Islam gives permission for a Muslim man, to marry a girl from the *Ahle Kitab*, but the vice-versa is not true. Coming to the second part of the question that - are not these Muslim women,
Mushriks?' Brother is referring to an *Ayat* of the *Qur'an Shareef,* of Surah Baqrah, Ch. No.2, Verse No. 221, which say that... ***'Do not marry unbelieving women until they believe - even a slave woman who is a believer, is better than a unbelieving woman, even if she allures you'.*** Means, even if the Queen of England... let her be the wealthiest lady, let the lady be the most beautiful in the world, still... a *Zhaduwali*, a slave woman, who is a believer, is much better than the best lady of the world... if she is an unbeliever. And the Verse continues... 'Do not marry your daughters to the unbelieving man, until he believes, for a slave man who is a believer, is better than an unbeliever, even if he allures you'. Another Verse in the *Qur'an* tells you from Surah Maidah... (Arabic)... Ch. No. 5, Verse No. 72, it says that... ***'They are blaspheming, they are doing Kufr, those who say Jesus is, Christ the son of Mary, those who say Allah is Christ the son of Mary'.*** (Arabic)... But said Christ... (Arabic)... O children of Israel... (Arabic)... Worship Allah. (Arabic)... Who is my Lord, and your Lord... (Arabic.)... And any one who associates partners with Allah... (Arabic)... Allah will make *Jannat, haram* for him (Arabic)... And for him, he shall have no helpers, and fire shall be his dwelling place. From this Verse, we come to know, that all those who say... 'Allah is Christ',

those who are saying… 'Jesus Christ (peace be upon him), is God'…they are doing *'Kufar'.* And one Verse of the *Qur'an,* says… 'You are allowed to marry these Kafirs.' You will think, the *Qur'an* is *contradicting* itself - but as I told you, analyse the *Qur'an,* as a whole. There is one more Verse in the *Qur'an*, in Surah Imran, Ch. No. 3, Verse No. 110, which says… (Arabic)… ***'O ye are the best of the people evolved for mankind'*** (Arabic)… ***'Evolved for mankind, and enjoining what is good, and forbidding what is bad'***. (Arabic)… ***And believing in Allah***… (Arabic)… ***It would have been better if the people of the book had faith***… (Arabic)… ***Among them there are some who are 'Momin'. Among the Ahle Kitab there some who are believers but the majority are perverted transgressors***. So *Qur'an* says… 'You are allowed to marry the women from the *Ahle Kitab,* who are believers, who are *Momins* - who do not believe that… Jesus Christ (May peace be upon him), is God, or son of God - but who believe, that Jesus (May peace be upon him), is a messenger of God, and they believe in only one God. Hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed). The next question, please.

(Q). *As-salam-Alaikum… main* Akila Faterpekar *Hoon*. Government of Maharashtra *mein* under secretary *Hoon*. *Mera* question, *hai ki a a Islam mein, Aurat Ko… Chahe wo Shadi Shuda ho, ya gair Shadi Shuda, Usko* will *karne Ka* permission *nahin hai*. *Ye Kyun hai? - Agar hai, to iske* details *deJiye*.

(Dr. Zakir) Sister has posed a question that why in Islam that the women is married or unmarried, she is not allowed to make a will - it is completely wrong. It is, as I mentioned in my lecture, Islam gave economical r*ights* to women, 1,300 years before the West - and I said very clearly in my talk, that… 'Any adult woman who is matured'. But natural, if she is a… if she is not an adult, she cannot practice… because she cannot there practice her r*ights*, arrives because she will not be matured. Any adult woman, irrespective whether she is married or unmarried… has the right to own or dispose any of her property, without consultation - if she wants, she take consultation. If she wants, she need not - She has the right to even make a will - Islam does not prohibit her that. I hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) Excuse me, Sir… we will allow questions only from the mike, and in turn please - We have to keep the decorum, by the people who have stood for sometime - The next question please.

(Q). My name is Roshan Rangwala - a businessman. Question is, Dr. Naik, as you said that… 'Islam gives equal right, to both ladies and gents' - then why man is allowed to keep 4 wives, and ladies are kept away from this privilege. As men can

think of another woman... at the same time after marrying one wife, man can think for another woman - why ladies cannot think for another?

(Dr. Zakir) The brother has asked the question, that since Islam allows '*Polygeny*', then why does... why does not Islam allow *'Polyandry'* - A man is allowed to marry more than one wife... why is not a woman allowed to marry more than one husband? Firstly you should realise, that man is more sexual than the woman. Point number 2... Biologically, a man can perform his duty as a husband, even after he has more than one wife... which a woman, if she has more than one husband, she will not be able to perform her duty, as a wife, enough and satisfactorily. Medical Science tells us that... 'The lady... during her menstrual period, undergoes certain behavioral and psychological changes... in which she is mentally disturbed and therefore... the majority of the quarrels, the majority of the quarrels that takes place... during the menstrual period. According to a report of the criminal record of the women in USA, most of the ladies that committed the crime, was during the menstrual period. Therefore for a wife, if she has more than one husband, to mentally adjust will be more difficult. Medical science also tells us... 'If a lady has more than one husband, she has chances of acquiring sexually transmitted diseases, as well as venereal diseases - and she can transmit it back to the husband... which is not the case if a husband, has more than one wife. And suppose, a man who has more than one wife, if he marries and if he has children, the identification of both the parents is possible - The father can be identified, and as well as the mother can be identified. In the other case, if a wife has more than one husband, you will only identify the mother, not the father. Islam gives utmost importance, to identification of the parents. And Psychologists tell us that... 'If a child cannot identify his parents, he undergoes mental trauma'. No wonder the children of prostitutes, they have a very bad childhood. And if the child goes for admission in the school, and if he is asked... 'What is the name of the father?'... You will have to give 2 names - and you know what the child is called. There are several reasons why *Polyandry* is not allowed. And for counter argument, if you tell me, that I will give you several reasons why *Polygeny* is allowed. For example, if a person does... if a couple does not have an issue, and if they marry - a man is allowed to take more than one wife. If suppose, the husband is sterile, can not the wife take more than one husband? No - because no doctor can give you the guarantee, that the husband is 100%
sterile. Even if you do *'Vasectomy'*, even if you do *'Nasbandi'...* no doctor can tell you, that the child cannot be a father - so still again the identity, the identification of that child, is yet in doubt. In the other case, suppose the husband, he undergoes an accident or he becomes very severely ill - can not the wife take another husband? Let us analyse... suppose the husband, if he undergoes an accident, or if he is severely ill... he cannot perform his duties very well. Firstly, of the financial aspects - he will not be able to look after the family, the children and the wife - and

secondly, he may not be able to satisfy the wife. Regarding this first criteria where he cannot satisfy the children and the wife, Islam has an option. Islam allows such people to take *Zakat* - those people who cannot make both the ends meet, they can take *Zakat*. And the 2nd aspect... Medical Science tells us that... 'A wife requires less conditions to be satisfied, as compared to a husband'. But still... if the wife still wants to... still if she is not satisfied, she has all the reasons to take *'Kulah'* from the husband, and marry another husband. Here a wife taking *'Kulah'*, is much more preferred - because here, when the wife is getting divorced, she is healthy. In the other case, if she is disabled... if she is handicapped - if she is divorced, who will marry her? Hope that answers the question.

(Q) I am Sardari Hakim, I would like to ask the question. The first thing is, here you have a subject - 'Women's Rights in Islam'. There, I think more women should have asked more questions - and it could have been, better... 'Rights and duties of men'... that subject would have been better - But the question is, you said in your speech, it was really lucid and nice - that a girl can say... 'No', if she does not want to marry a particular person. But while saying... speaking in your lecture, you have said that... 'A woman cannot be economically independent - in the sense, she cannot earn'. And can these people - when a girl says... 'No' - look after the child, say nicely? She is always going to be under the mercy of the male folk, under this circumstances - I would like to know what is the answer?

(Dr. Mohammed) Excuse me, can you put your question in just two or three lines... what answer you want. We would request all the questioners, to present your questions, the basic background. of problems in society. I believe Dr. Zakir would be having an idea about it... you kindly state your question - what is the question?

(Q). My question is that, when you said that a girl can say... 'No', if she does not want to marry a particular person - but the male folk are feeding her, looking after her ... she is dependent out on them - Can She exist safely after saying 'No'?

(Dr. Zakir) Sister has asked the question, that I said in my lecture, that a woman has a right to say... 'No', for marriage - but will she be able to safely exist, after saying 'No'? You did not pay attention to my full lecture, sister. In my lecture, I said... 'It is the duty of the man in the family - before marriage it is the duty of the father and the brother, to look after her lodging, clothing, boarding and financial aspects'. And after marriage, it is the duty of the husband and the son, to look after her financial aspects. If she says... 'No', yet it continues to be the duty of the father and the brother, to look after her - She can very well can say... 'No'. I do not know what is the problem.

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question, please.

(Q). I am Prakash Lote - first of all, I thank organisation for calling people of faiths - and so I am asking another question. For all the Religions, whether it is Hinduism, Christian, or Islam… in books there are many good things. But for years… after thousands of years, the practices of all the Religions, have been discriminatory towards women, and no Religion is a exception to this. So the question is… what is written in the books, whether it is *Bible*, *Qur'an* or *Gita* or whatever it is, whether that is more important, or the practice of the society which is more important? And if practice is more important, then we should give very little importance to what is being written in all such Holy Books, including *Qur'an*, *Gita*, whatever it is. So on this, I will expect answer, where in practice, what could be done…instead of saying what is being written in this book, or that book.

(Dr. Mohammed) Thank you.

(Dr. Zakir) The brother has asked a very good question - He says that... all the Scriptures speak about good things, but let us see what people practice. We have to pay more importance to the practice, than to theoretical things - and I do agree with him. What we are doing here is… that I have said in my lecture, that many Muslim societies have deviated away from the *Qur'an* and the *Sunnah.* What we are doing here is, we are calling the people to come closer to the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah*. Regarding the first part of the question, that all the Religious Scriptures… all Religious Scriptures speak good, so it is useless talking about Religious Scriptures - I do not agree with you. I have given a lecture on 'Status of Women in Islam and other Religions', and I have compared the status of women in Islam, as compared to Hinduism, to Buddhism, to Christianity, and to Judaism - and there I have compared, and you yourself can be the judge, if you have opportunity to hear that lecture - you can hear that lecture, you yourself can judge, which Religion gives the maximum *rights*. Even if you agree, theoretically Islam gives a maximum *rights* - Now we have to practically follow it. There are people who are following certain aspects… certain aspects, people are not following it. For example, Islamic Law - where it comes to Criminal punishment and Civil rights, Saudi… Saudi Government is doing very good, *Alhamdullillah* - Even they are deviating, away from the *Qur'an*, in certain aspects. What we have to do is, we have to take the practical example of the Saudi Government, as a Islamic law of Criminal punishment, and if it is practicable, apply it throughout the world. And check another society, which is practicing the Islamic law in the social aspect, and if it is the best, you apply to the other world. What we have gathered here, brother… is to make you realise, this law is the best law - If we are not putting in practice, we are to blame… not the Religion. So that is why, we have called the people… so that they will understand *Qur'an* and the *Hadith*, in the right practice - They will understand *Qur'an* and *Hadith* in the right way, and put it into practice. I hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) Next question from the top please.

(Q) *As-Salam Alaikum*, I am Saima Kadri - and my question is that, why there are no women Prophets in Islam.

(Dr. Mohammed) No women Prophets.

(Dr. Zakir) Sister has posed a question - why are there no *'Women Prophets'* in Islam? If by *'Prophets'* you mean, that a person who receives the *message* and who acts like a leader to the people, then I can say for sure, that in Islam we have got no *'Women Prophets'.* And I think it is right, because if a woman has to be a *Prophet* - The *Qur'an* clearly states, that man is the leader of the family. So if the man is the leader in the family... how can he lead the... how can a woman lead over the people? Come to the second part - a Prophet has to even lead the congregational prayers. And as I said earlier, that there are certain postures like *Qayam, Ruku, Sujud*, standing, bowing and doing the *Sujud*... prostration - and which, if a *Woman Prophet* does, the congregation behind, will get disturbed. There are situations like... the Prophet has to meet with the common man, very regularly. If it is a *Woman Prophet...* Islam does not allow intermingling of sexes. If the *Prophet* is a lady... she... and if she gets pregnant - but natural, she will not be able to do her duties for a few months. If she has children, it will be difficult for her, to do the duty of the mother as well as the *Prophet*. And a man is more capable of doing the duty of the *Prophet*, and the father... as compared to a woman, who does the duty of a mother, as well as the *Prophet.* But if you mean that a *Prophet* is a person who is chosen, and who is pure and holy, then there are several examples - and the best example I can quote is, of *Bibi* Mariyam (may Allah be pleased with her). It is mentioned in Surah Maryam, Ch. No. 3, Verse No. 42... (Arabic)... ***'And behold the angels said to Mary'.*** (Arabic)... ***'That Allah has chosen thee, and purified thee, and purified above the women of all nations'.*** If you mean *'a Prophet'* is a person who is chosen and purified, then we have the example of Bibi Mariyam (May Allah be pleased with her), who was the mother of Jesus(May peace be upon her). We have other examples - If you read in Surah Tahrim, Ch. No. 66, Verse No. 11, it says that... ***'As an example for the believers, is the wife of the Pharoah'...*** Bibi Asiya (May Allah be pleased with her), she prayed to Allah (SWT)...***'Make for me, in nearness to Thee, a Mansion in the Garden, and save me from the Pharaoh, and its evil things'***. Imag-ine... she was the wife, of the most powerful person of that time...Pharaoh - and she rejects all the luxuries, and asks for Allah (SWT), in exchange...a Mansion in the Garden. According to Islam, there are 4 *Prophet women,* besides *Bibi* Mariyam and *Bibi* Asiya (may Allah be pleased with them) - The other the examples are of *Bibi* Fatema and *Bibi* Khatija, (May Allah be pleased with them both). Hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) There are quite a few people asking *ke*, they would feel shy to come up to the mike, and we should start asking questions from the chits. *InshaAllah,* after the next three questions, it will be all right to start our 2nd due preference session too - the next question.

(Q). My name is Sameer, I am a student – I would like to ask this question. You have put up an... there is an upper limit in Islam for women, for man to marry four wives - But why did the Prophet Mohammed (Peace by upon him), have eleven wives - and there is an insinuation, that he was hyper sexual?

(Dr.Zakir) The brother has asked the question that, since Islam allows the maximum of four wives, how come Prophet Muhammed had eleven wives. I do agree with the brother, the *Qur'an* mentions in Surah Nisa, Chapter 4, Verse No. 3, that you can maximum have 4 wives. But there is another Verse in Surah Ahzab, Ch. 33, Verse 52, which says that… ***'O Prophet you cannot marry more women, neither can you exchange any other women for the present one, even if their beauty attracts you, except what your right hand possesses***. This Verse of the *Qur'an,* Surah Ahzab, Ch. 33, Verse No. 52, gives the permission to the Prophet, to keep all his wives, but at the same time, cannot marry any other women, except which your right hand possesses. If you analyse why Prophet Muhammed was not allowed to marry more wives - and besides that, he could not neither divorce them, because there is one more Verse in the *Qur'an,* which says that… 'As for the wives of the Prophet, whether they are divorced or whether they become widows, no person can marry them, because they are *Um-ul Mominin*… they are the *Mothers* of the believers'. So since no one could marry the wives of the Prophet, but natural …the Prophet could not divorce them also. And if you analyse, that all the eleven marriages which the Prophet did… all were either for social reform or for political reason - Were not to please his sex. The first marriage that he did, was with *Bibi* Khatija, (May Allah be pleased with her). She was at the age of 40,when he was only 25 - And she was a widow twice. Imagine, if he married for sex, why would he marry a woman who was fifteen years elder to him, and who was a widow twice. And if you analyse, till the time *Bibi* Khatija (May Allah be pleased with her)… till the time she was alive, Prophet Muhammed did not take any other wives. When he was the age of 50, *Bibi* Khatija (May Allah be pleased with her), she expired. Only between the age of 53 to 56, did Prophet take all the other wives.Imagine… if the Prophet was hyper sexual, he would have married at a young age. Science tells us… 'The older the man gets, the less sexual he gets'. It is an insinuation, on the Prophet. Only 2 of his marriages were normal - that with *Bibi* Khatija, and that with *Bibi* Ayesha, (May Allah be pleased with them both). All the other marriages were due to circumstances… either of a social reform, or a political gain. If you analyse all, only 2 wives were below the age of 36 - All the other wives were between the age of 36 and 50 - You can give instances… each marriage had some reason. For example *Bibi* Johariya, who was from the Banu-Mustalik tribe… which was very powerful tribe, and which was at logger heads with Islam - After a certain time, they were suppressed by the Islamic Army, and later on, the Prophet married her. And after he married her, the companions said…'How can we keep as captives, the relatives of the Prophet' - And they freed those people…and after that, both these tribes became friendly. There are examples, when he married *Bibi* Maimoona (May Allah be pleased with her), who was the sister of the wife of the chief of the tribe of *Najad*, which killed 70 Muslim, men of the Islamic deputation. After Mohammed (May peace be upon him)… when he married her, they accepted *Medina* as their leadership, and they accepted Prophet as their leader. All the… all

the marriages which he did, had some political reason or social reform. He married *Umme* Habiba, who was the daughter of the Chief of *Mecca*, Abu-Sufiyan - but natural this marriage played a great importance in the conquest of *Mecca.* Other example like *Bibi* Safiya (May Allah be pleased with her), she was the daughter of a powerful Jewish leader - After this, the Jewish became very friendly to the Muslims. If you see, all the marriages had some social reforms - he married the daughter of *Hazrat* Ummer, Hafsa (May Allah be pleased with her), to get closer relationship between the companions. As a social reform, he married a lady who was divorced...the first cousin Zainab - After she was divorced, he married her. All the marriages have some political reason or social reform - So all his marriages were based, to improve the community and to better relationships - It was not for sex. Hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question, please.

(Q). I am Hasina Farawaze Miswa, and a Law student. I am asking you 2 questions, Mr. Zakir Naik – Okay, in what way is the practice of *Polygamy*, determinate beneficial to women?

(Dr. Zakir) Sister has asked the question, in what way is *Polygamy* beneficial to the women... correct?

(Q). Yes, and other question - Why do you think... Okay, why do you think women enter into *polygamous* marriages?

(Dr.Zakir) First she asked that, why *Polygamy* is beneficial to a woman - Is why, if a man marries more than one husband ... how is it benefiting the woman. It is helping her to keep herself modest... because if every man married one woman, there will be millions of women in the world, who will not find husbands - and the only option for them to be... the only option for them, is to become public property. So *Polygamy* is allowed in Islam... to protect the modesty of the female, to prevent them from becoming public properties. Hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) Next question from the brother on the left.

(Q). My name is Mohammed Ashraf - my question is - Is adoption allowed in Islam?

(Dr.Zakir) Brother has asked the question - Is adoption allowed in Islam. If by adoption, you mean that you take a young child... a poor child and give him lodging, boarding, clothing bringing into your house ... Islam has always stressed in the *Qu'ran* that you should help the poor people, help the needy people - You can even

get a child to your house, and give him your fatherly love. What Islam objects to is, you cannot legally adopt - you cannot give your name to the child - Legal adoption, is prohibited in Islam. Why? ... because if a person adopts a child legally, there can be several complications. First, if that man... sorry... the child, whether it is a girl or boy, it will loose its identity. Point number 2... if suppose after you adopt a child, you may have your own children - No one can say, that you will never have children throughout your life. If you have your own children, you will be bias towards your own child, than the adopted child. Point number three... if the children born to you... if they are of opposite sex of that of the adopted child, they cannot freely stay in the same house... because they are not blood sisters and brothers, to each other. If the adopted child, after he grows up - If it is a girl... after she grows up she will have to do *Hijab* with the so called father, because he is not his original father. If the adopted child is a man... if it is a boy and he becomes elderly, he becomes a man, and then if he marries again - there has to be *Hijab* between the daughter-in-law, and the so called father. And there are several other reasons... and besides that, if you the adopt a child, you will be depriving many of your relatives of their *rights*. When after a person dies, whatever property he has, is divided according to whatever is mentioned in the *Qur'an*. If the person has children, and if he adopts a child, but natural he will be... he will be depriving a share of his own child. If the person... if he dies, if he has a children... then the wife will get half the share as she should get , if she has no children, including the mother. If there are children, she gets one sixth... if there are no children, she gets one third. Again if you adopt a child, you are depriving the share of your mother. So to prevent these complications, legal adoption is prohibited in Islam.

(Dr. Mohammed) Next question.

(Q). *Salam-Alaikum,* I am Kamar Syed - Deputy Secretary, Home Department. In your elegant speech, you have mentioned that for a divorced woman... after the divorce, the husband looks after her during the period of *'iddat'*... maintenance allowance is given to her - But after *'iddat'*, I presume that the parents are supposed to look after the girl - In case the parents do not have the provisions to look after the girl, I would ask you... what is the girl suppose to do?

(Dr. Zakir) Sister has asked a very good question, that suppose a lady, she is divorced - It is the duty of the husband, to provide support till the *'iddat'* period, which lasts for may be 3 months, or till pregnancy. After that... as I mentioned in my lecture, it is the duty of the husband... sorry... the duty of the father or the brother, to look after her. If suppose, the father and the brother are unable to look after such ladies, it is the duty of the other close relatives, to look after her. If the other close relatives do not look after her, it is the duty of the *Ummah,* Muslim... Muslim *Ummah*... that we should set up organisations, and have *Zakat* funds, with

which we can look after such ladies. Even if this does not work, it is the duty of the Islamic State, as the last resort, to look after such ladies. Hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) Now we would start with some questions from the slips, which have come. We will have one question from the slip, and one from the speaker, then again one from the slip, one from the speaker, one from the slip, one from the speaker, and so on.

(Q). *Assalamo Alaikum*, I am Sayed Riaz speaking - I am in business. As you said and as I know, that in Islam, men and women are equal - So why is it that a woman in Islam, is not entitled to equal property Rights? - thank you.

(Dr. Zakir) Brother has posed a question, that I said that in my lecture, that economical *rights* of women and men, are equal. So how come she is not entitled to her equal *rights*, when it comes to inheritance - and normally people say that the woman gets 1/2 the share, as compared to that of the male. The answer to this question, is given in the *Qur'an*, in Surah Nisa, Ch. No. 4, Verse No. 11 and 12, which gives the guidelines, how the inheritance should be divided. It says… ***'Allah has ordained for your as regarding your children… as regarding your children's inheritance - for a female, a share half that of the male, and if only daughters 2 or more, they share in a two third - if only one, they get half'***. The Verse continues… ***'And one sixth share for the parents, if the deceased have children. If you have no children… if the deceased has no children, the mother gets one third.*** If the deceased has brothers and sisters… mother gets one sixth'. And the Verse continues… Verse number 12 says… ***'As in what your wife leaves your share is half, if there are no children, and your share is one fourth, if there are children. As in what you leave for your wife, your wife's share is one fourth, if there are no children, and one eight if there are children'.*** In short, most of the time, the female gets half the share of the male counter part, but not in all cases. For example, for a uterine brother and sister, both get one sixth, if the deceased has got no ascendant or descendent… both get equal share. If the deceased has got no children, both mother and father get equal share of one sixth. And in certain cases, if the person who has died, is a lady who has got no children, the husband gets half, the mother gets one third, and the father gets one sixth. That means, there are cases in which the woman even gets double than that of the male counter part - that is, the mother gets double than that of the father. But I agree with you, in most of the cases, the female gets 1/2 the share as compared to the man, when it is considered to daughter and a wife. But the answer to this, is that since man… since man is held responsible for the financial aspects of the family, and in order not to do injustice to the man, Allah has given a higher share to the man, as compared to the woman - Otherwise we

will have to have a lecture on... 'The *rights* of men'. I would like to give an example - Suppose a person dies, and after the properties have been distributed... the share of the children, remaining is one and a half lakh - and that person has two children, one son, one daughter. According to the Islamic *Shariah*, the son gets 1 lakh Rupees, and the daughter gets fifty thousand Rupees - but of the one lakh Rupees which the son receives, he has to spend, may be the majority of it, on looking after his family - may be eighty thousand or... eighty thousand ... or 1 lakh, he has to spend on looking after the family. But that lady when she receives 50,000 she does not have to spend a single pie on looking after her family.

(Clapping).....

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question, we will ask from the chit - We would request you to put brief questions, and I would request our speaker to give brief answers. We have only about 25 minutes left, for the Question - Answer session.

(Dr. Mohammed) This is from Bijay - from IIT, Powai, Bombay. He asks... 'Islam' does not allow intermingling of sex in work place - is this *modernising* or *outdated* ?- Please explain.

(Dr. Mohammed) Another connected question is... 'Can a woman work as an Airhostess, since it is a decent and highly paid job? - this is from Sujat'.

(Dr.Zakir) Regarding the first question, that Islam does not allow intermingling of sexes - Is this *modernising* or *outdated* ? If you mean by *modernising,* that you keep your women for sale, that you intermingle with them, or you can even take the profession as modeling, then I feel that Islam is *outdated*. Because women ... by the Western media, by the Western culture - they have said that they have given more *rights* to the women ... they are raising the status of the women - actually they are degrading it. According to statistics, it tells us that 50% of the women in America, who go to universities and work places, are raped - Do you know that? 50%, why? - Because most of the jobs in America, involve intermingling of sexes. If you think that a lady should be raped, it is *modernising*, then Islam is *outdated* - if you think not, then Islam is the most *modernising*.

(Clapping)...

Regarding the 2nd part of the question - Why is not... does Islam allow a woman to work as an Airhostess, since it is a highly paid job, and a decent job. I do agree with the first part, I do agree it is very highly paid - But the second part, let us analyse. The Airhostesses are normally chosen... main criteria for selecting Airhostess, is beauty - you will never find an ugly Airhostess. They are selected

because they are young, they are selected because they are attractive. They are made to wear clothes, which are against the Islamic ethics - they are made to wear cosmetics to attract the customers. They have to tend to certain needs of the passengers, which are mainly men, in which there is close proximity between the man and woman. And many a times the gents passengers unnecessarily, they involve in conversation with the Airhostess, and even if the Airhostess wants to give fitting reply, she can not, because her job is at stake. Many a times, the passenger may say… 'Madam please tie my seat belt' - the Airhostess has no option, but she has to tie the seat belt. What is going to happen? - there is going to be close proximity between the opposite sex. Many Airlines also serve alcohol - Islam prohibits any man or woman to serve alcohol. That is the reason, all the Airhostesses are women. There are gents pursers… male pursers in the flight, but they rarely attend to the customers – they are in the kitchen. It is the opposite - In the plane it is the opposite… in the plane it is the opposite. And believe me, an Airlines cannot do without employing ladies. Even the Saudi Airlines, *'Supposed to be'*, in inverted commas … the most Islamic, *'Supposed to be'*, inverted commas … even they have ladies Airhostesses. But since they can not have Saudi girls … it will be difficult - they import the girls, they have foreign Airhostess. Double standards … double standards - there is no option. The Airline is a profession, which… in which you have to have ladies to attract the customers - and you will be shocked to know that certain rules of Airlines. For example, Indian Airlines as well as Air India… it states that… 'After you are selected, you cannot marry for 4 years' - Some Airlines tell you that… 'If you get pregnant, your job is terminated.' Imagine, some Airlines say that… 'You retire at the age of 35' – Why?… Because you are no longer attractive. Do you call it a decent job?

(Clapping)…

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question please.

(Q). In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Merciful, and Bountiful. *As-Salam-Alaikum* - I am Parveen Alaviya, a practicing lawyer, and a researcher in world Religions. My question to you Dr. Naik is - you mentioned the solitary illustration of woman, who told the body that she was forced into a marriage, and her marriage was allowed to be invalidated. This incident took place years ago around the year, if possible… the body.

Qur'an… is the constitution of the *rights* of women and men - Is there a body? – If so, name… it which also enforces the breakage and *rights* - Thank you.

(Dr.Zakir) Sister has asked a very good question. She has asked about the *rights* of the women - Is very well laid down in the *Qur'an* and the *Hadith*, and if a woman

is forced into marriage, that marriage can be invalidated. Is there any *body* today existing, which can invalidate such marriages? There are many *bodies* - example, in Iran as well as in Saudi Arabia. Unfortunately, the Indian government does not allow the Muslim community to have such courts - Though there is a Muslim personal law, but all the *rights* are not given. If you request the Indian Government, to allow us to have such boards out here in India, and *InshAllah* even in India, we will have such *'bodies'*. They have given only certain *rights*... not all the *rights*.

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question from the chit. Is co-education allowed in Islam? - This is from Rashheed Shaikh - He is a student. Is co-education allowed in Islam?

(Dr.Zakir) Brother has asked a question ... is co-education allowed in Islam?... Can meaning... males and females study in the same school, college or universities? First, let us analyse whether male and female, can study in the same school. Those reports which came last year in *'The World this Week'*... and it gave the survey of the schools, both Unisex schools as well as and Co-Ed. schools in the U.K - And the surveyor said that... 'The overall result of Unisex sex schools, was much better than a Co-Ed. Schools'. When interviews were taken of the teachers, they said that... 'Students in Unisex schools, concentrated more than the Co-Ed. schools.' When interviews of students were taken, they preferred studying in Co-Ed. schools, than Unisex schools ... and you know the reason very well, why? And that survey continued - It said that...'People in Co-Ed. schools, spent more time in becoming popular with the opposite sex. And besides lack of concentration, they gave very smart answers to the teachers, and they spend more time in dating, than in gaining education in school. And the last point of that survey, was the UK government was thinking of setting up more Unisex schools, in the country. According to the American report, it said that... 'Girls in school, spent more time in picking up illicit sex techniques from the classmates, than acquiring knowledge from the teachers.' In India, the same thing is happening... to a greater or lesser extent. Let us analyse the males and females together, in the colleges and universities. All the points I mentioned for schools, they are magnified when it comes to college and universities. According to a report of *'News Week'* which was published on 17th of March 1980, on page number 50, it said that... the sexual assault of the women in the universities are given. And it said - I will not repeat the full history of that report, because time is short, but the main point is, that... 'Lecturers and professors - they forced the lady into sexual harassment, in exchange for a better grade. Same thing is happening in India, in Bombay - and after your are sexually harassed, but natural, the concentration to education goes low. You had an incident last year, which... which made the headlines of the paper – I have forgotten the name of the college, in which a girl student was raped in the broad daylight, by 4 or

5 students, in the college premises. And according to a report which came day before yesterday, in the *Times of India* on the 26th of August, it repeated the report of *New York Times* - It said that... '25% of the ladies that go to schools and universities in America, are raped'. My basic question is... 'Do you want to send your child to a school to get educated, or do you want to send your child to the school, to pick up illicit techniques, or be sexually harassed?' If it is the first, I would advice you to put them in Unisex schools... and there are several of the kind in the city. Hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) I have an announcement to make - I would just like to inform you regarding this session - We have outside available for sale, video tapes of Dr. Zakir Naik, which are available for sale at a discounted price of Rs. 150/- each. The topics covered are... this cassette of the Bombay Union of Journalist, debate on – 'Is Religious Fundamentalism, a Stumbling Block in the freedom of Expression?' when he spoke along with Dr. Vyas and Father Pereira, a Jezuit expert. Then, we have ...'Religion in the right perspective', given at a place in Nariman Point - we have... 'Islam, the Universal Religion' at Mani Bhavan, organised by the Bombay Sarvodaya Mandal, and '*Al-Qur'an* : Should it be read with meaning?', a lecture given at the SNDT University Hall, Juhu - there are available for sale outside. We also have the Holy *Qur'an*, which is available on a *hadiya*, a nominal *hadiya* of Rs. 150/- each - This is the English *Qur'an...* with the text and English translation, by Abdullah Yusuf Ali, along with it's commentary. We know that we have quite a lot of questions coming up - there is lot of enthu... enthusiasms, but at the same time, I have to be pragmatic - We have our time limitations. We have with us next 10 to 15 minutes, in which we have to complete this session. I would request... we have... we will allow one question from this end, the next on the top, third here, and I think because *Women's right session*, we will end with the lady on the top. In between, it will be interspersed with brief questions from the chits that I have received. Those who are interested in having further questions, I would like to inform them on this subject, or on any subject of Islam and comparative Religion... you are most welcome to attend our lectures, followed by Question and Answers - may be, in a smaller setting on Fridays at 2:45 p.m. for ladies, every Friday that is, and every Saturday at 2:45 p.m. open for all, and on Sunday at 10:45 a.m. open for all. Muslims, Non-Muslims all are welcome, and in a very cordial and open atmosphere... you are allowed to criticize, cross examine and openly discuss Islam and it's values, without offending the speaker or yourself. If you feel, you can better educate that lecture or that talk is there, we would be happy to be corrected. And we hope in the same spirit, you would be able to discuss with a very open mind, the problems we face in society and the world in general - The next question please.

(Q). Dr. Naik, my question... is for last fourteen hundred years, one thousand and four hundred years, only main Ulemas have interpreted *Qur'an* and *Hadith*. Of course I was enlightened by your speech in the beginning, that Aaisha *Ji* was a Religious scholar, and she used to interpret. My question is... how many women, female *Ulemas* or Religious scholars are today to interpret *Qur'an* and *Hadith,* today - how many, what is the percentage? - and another thing... another thing, I am... just... just finishing - this question arises from 'the Taslima of Bengal'...that when she made a sentence... I mean, *Moulvi* started shouting - there was not a lady *Ulema* to, I mean to reply to these *Moulvis* or take the side of Taslima, or anything. We have not read what Taslima has said, because we cannot get all the literature here in India, either from Pakistan or from Bengal, or anywhere - so we would like you to read...

(Dr. Mohammed) Excuse me, Excuse me, I would like you to ask directly ... Excuse me gentleman, I would like you to ask directly the question, regarding Taslima Nasreen - what you would like to know? Ask the question directly.

(Q). I know, please I will make it short - How many lady *Ulemas* are there today, to interpret *Qur'an* and *Hadith*, and what is their percentage in comparison to men - thank you very much.

(Dr. Zakir) Uncle has asked a question, that he agrees that at the time of the Prophet, there were many ladies, who not only interpreted the *Hadiths*, they memorized... memorized. And *Hazrat* Aaisha (May Allah be pleased with her), she herself has narrated... narrated, on her authority itself... only 2210 *Hadiths* are based, only on her authority. The basic question is, how many *Ulema* women, do you have today? - he wants to know the percentage. There are several lady *Ulemas,* and there are many Muslim organizations, in Bombay as well as in *Darr-ul-ulm,* in *Nadwa* etc., in several places as *Islah-ul-Banaat* in Bombay - Several Muslim organizations which produce lady *Ulema* – Percentage, I do not know of ...do not know - but there are hundreds... hundreds. Why did not any... regarding my second part of the question – Why did not any lady support the cause for Taslima Nasreen? - The first question arises... Should she be supported? Regarding the answer for the question on Taslima Nasreen, this cassette is available outside in the foyer. This cassette - we had a debate in the Bombay Union of Journalist - Bombay Union of Journalists had a debate between myself and Dr. Vyas and Father Peirera as well as Ashok Shahani, who translated into Marathi *'Lajja'*. And many people objected... many people guided me, that do not go to that debate - It will be a problem, they will misquote you - And believe me, I had two minds. And finally my father guided me...'Take the name of Allah, and go'-
And I went... *Al-hamdulillah. Al-hamdulillah,* it was only because of Allah's, support that the debate was successful – It was so successful, that not a single paper

reported it - You know that? - Not a single paper. There was the *Times of India,* there was the *Indian Express*, there was *Mahanagar*, Nikhil Waghle himself was there, there was UTI, there were PTIs also there - No one reported... Why? - because I did not say what they wanted. If I would have said... If I would have said what they wanted, it would have been headlines - 'Islamic Scholar, Dr. Zakir Naik... and so and so' - Because I did not say what they wanted, no report. As the full answer, the cassette is available outside.

(Dr. Mohammed) The last 3 questions.

(Q). Is it only the husband... this is from Jennifer - It says... - Is it only the husband who can say 'Triple *Talaq*' and get one... and get one? - What has a woman to do, if she wants to get divorce or '*Talaq*'?

(Dr. Zakir) The sister has asked a question, that a husband can divorce a woman - She has not asked about Triple '*Talaq*', that is another answer. But the main question is - A husband can divorce... Can a woman also divorce, or can she give '*Talaq*'? A woman cannot give '*Talaq*' - because '*Talaq*' is a Arabic word used for divorce, when a man gives to a woman - husband gives to a wife - but a woman can divorce. There are 5 types of divorce, in Islam - The first type is by unilateral... by unilateral agreement, between the husband and wife - Both may say... 'Okay, we are not compatible... let us part'. The second type, is by the unilateral will of the husband, that is called a '*Talaq*', in which, he has to forgo his *'Meher'*. If he has not paid it, he has to pay it to her... and including the gifts, he has given to her. Third type, is by the unilateral will of the wife - I repeat, by the unilateral will of the wife... if she mentions it in her marriage contract. If she mentions it in her *Nikah-Nama*... in her marriage contract, that she has the right to give unilateral divorce, she can give it - It is call as '*Isma*'. I have never heard of anyone speaking of an '*Isma*' - It is called as '*Isma*' - Even a woman can give *divorce*, '*Isma*'. Third category is, if the husband ill-treats her, or not give her equal *rights*, she has the right to go to a *Kazi,* and nullify the marriage - It is called as *'Nikah-e-Fask*'. In this, according to the *Kazi*, he may ask the husband to give the full *'Meher',* or part of the *'Meher'*, depending upon the *Kazi*. And the last is *'Kulah'*- that even though the husband may be a very good husband, the wife has got no complaints against the husband, but for personal reasons, she does not like the husband - she has... she can request the husband, to divorce her - and that is called as *'Kulah'.* But very few people talk about women giving divorce, to the men. Some of the *Ulemas* have categorized these 5 types of divorce, into 2 or 3 different categories, but broadly there are 5 types of divorce, in Islam. Hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed) We would now ask 2 very short questions, again from the slips - then we will allow a last question, to Zakir… to give in very brief, the answer to the question.

(Q). Why are women, not allowed in the Mosque?

(Dr. Zakir) The question asked is, why are not women, allowed in the Mosque - And in brief, it is difficult. There is no statement in the *Qur'an* or the *Sahih Hadith*, which prevents women from entering the Mosque. Some people quote a particular *Hadith*, and say that the Prophet said… 'It is better for the women to pray in the house, than the Mosque - It is better for her to pray in the house, in her inner room, than in her house'. They are taking hold only of one source, and neglecting all the other sources - You should realize the context of this *Hadith*. Prophet Mohammed also said that… 'When you pray in the Mosque in congregation, you get 27 times, more Sawab. So a lady questioned Prophet Mohammed… 'We have got infants, we have got household work… how can we go to the Mosque?' - So in reply to this, the Prophet said that…'If a lady prays in the house, it is better than the Mosque - It is preferable for her to pray in the room, than the house' - If she has infants or problems, then she will get the same *Sawab* There are several *Hadiths* which indicate that women were never prevented from entering the Mosque. There is a *Hadith* which says that…'Prevent not the servant of Allah, who are females, from entering the Mosque. Another *Hadith* says… 'The Prophet ordained the husbands, that if your wives want to go to the Mosques, do not prevent them - And several *Hadiths* are there, I will not go to the details. But Islam gives permission for a woman to enter the Mosque - But there are separate and equal facilities - We do not believe in intermingling of sexes. Why we do not believe… as the question was asked earlier.If we have intermingling of sexes…and as we know what happens in the other Religious places - People come more for to *Eve teasing* and *bird watching,* than to pray. Therefore, Islam does not believe in intermingling of sexes. There are separate entrances for man and woman - separate places of *'Wuduh*', ablution, for man and woman. Man and woman are made to stand separately, and a woman cannot stand in the front, because… because if a woman stands in front, but natural the man behind will be disturbed. In Islam when we pray, we stand shoulder to shoulder - And the medical doctors, they tell us that… 'The female has 1 degree higher… one degree higher temperature.' If you have a lady next to you, you will feel warm and soft - Instead of concentrating… instead of concentrating on Allah (SWT), you concentrate on the lady. That is why in Islam, the women have to stand behind. You go to Saudi Arabia… women are allowed in the Mosque, you go to London… women are allowed in the Mosque, you go to America… women are allowed in the Mosque - It is only in India, that they are prevented, and a few countries close by. You go to the *Haram-Sharif* in *Mecca,* in *Masjid-e-Nabwi,* they are allowed. But *Al-Hamdullillah*

there are few Mosques in India, even in Bombay, which have started allowing women in the Mosque - Hope the other Mosques will follow.

(Dr. Mohammed) Thank you… the next question please.

(Q). Excuse me, I would like to ask this question, please. This question comes from a student of 'College of Social Work' - this meeting is on 'Women's Rights in Islam', but I believe that most of the questions, have satisfied our male audience. As far as practicality is involved… as far practicality is, that is an infinite series of argument will go on… if you if you are going to look at that.

(Dr. Mohammed) Excuse me, if you could put your question, we will try to satisfy that.

(Q). This question that …Okay.

(Dr. Mohammed) Could you please put your question, because we have a very short time - You put your question, we would try to satisfy that.

(Q). This question goes to Islamic Research Foundation. I want to ask, that this meeting is on 'Women's Rights in Islam', and why is not there any single woman, sitting on the stage?... Why do we have male panel only, on the stage - And we believe that if this does not satisfy our female audience… audience, for whom the meeting is organized?

(Dr.Zakir) The sister has posed a question, that why are not women sitting on the stage, in this function - Because there is no woman speaker today, sister. We have programmes in IRF on Fridays… we have programmes in our organization on Friday, where there are ladies speakers, and there… the lady speaks. Here I am supposed to speak on the topic, and I am a gent, *Al-hamdullillah*. I am not a female… and… and the chief guest also… *Al-hamdullillah,* Justice M. M. Kazi, and the coordinator, all are men. There are programmes in which females speak, and we have female speakers, as well as female, chief guests. *InshaAllah,* when we have a programme next time, we will invite you for that.

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question is, on '*Talaq*' - Is it necessary, for the husband to take permission of the first wife, before marrying the second? - in brief please.

(Dr. Zakir) The question posed is - Is it necessary for the husband to take the permission of the first wife, before marrying? It is not compulsory for the husband to take the permission of the first wife, before marrying, because *Qur'an* says... 'The only reason… the only condition, for a person in which he can take more than one wife, is… he should be just, between his wives' - but it is preferable, that he

takes the permission. And it is his duty, to inform his first wife that he is marrying, because Islam says... 'If you have more than one wife, you have to do justice'. And if the permission is given by the first wife, but natural… but natural there will be more cordial relationship between the husband, and both the wives. But it is not compulsory, except in one condition… except in one condition, if the wife mentions in her marriage contract, that…'I do not want you to take any other wife, as long as I am there' - Then it becomes compulsory for the husband, to take the permission of the wife, before marrying – Otherwise, in all other cases it is not compulsory… it is preferable.

(Dr. Mohammed) The next question in brief please, in one line.

(Q). My name is Yawar Hussain. When men and women are not allowed to mingle… so how women were allowed to mingle in the battle fields, in the past?

(Dr. Zakir) Brother has asked the question, that Islam does not allow intermingling of sexes - how come they intermingled in the battlefield? If you heard my speech correctly brother, I said…'Even in the battlefield they were… they were doing *Hijab* ' - There were slight concessions given. If you read *Sahih Bukhari*, it said that… 'The feet of the women were seen' - Normally even the feet are covered. So Islam gives the concession… that during battlefield, since women even rode horses, the feet were seen. So Islam gives little leniency - but there, they do not intermingle… like what they do in the American Army - they had to maintain the Islamic ethics, as well the Islamic dress code.

(Dr. Mohammed) We will allow this last question in brief. Video culture, films, songs, novels, magazines, co-education, have filled the present situation with sexual anarchy - Is it recommendable in these circumstances, to allow our children, specially daughters, to get married by their own free will - this is Mohammed Aslam Gazi.

(Dr. Zakir) The brother asked the question, that since in the world of science and technology… and we have so many films on sex, etc. - Is it advisable to allow the daughter, to have her own free choice in marriage? I told you, that the parent can surely give guidance… can guide their daughters in marriage - they can not force them - And how do you know that the parent is always right? So here, Islam gives permission that the parents can guide their children in marriage, but they can not force, because it is finally the daughter who has to live with the husband, not the parent.

(Dr. Mohammed) We will allow a quick one line question from the top, and then we have the vote of thanks.

(Q). *As-Salam-Alaikum* - I am Mrs. Razia Khan. According to *Muslim Personal Law*, only the father is natural guardian of the... of his children - Why?

(Dr. Zakir) Sister has posed a question - According to the *Muslim Personal Law*, only father is the natural guardian - It is wrong sister. According to Islamic *Shariah,* if a child in its initial stages... approximately at the age of seven... if he is below the age of 7, the guardianship goes to the mother - because a mother's responsibility, is more than the father's responsibility, in the initial stage. After that, the guardianship goes to the father - and after he becomes matured, it is his... it is the free will of the child - he chooses himself, or she chooses herself, who she wants to be with. But during this course, Islam says that... irrespective the child is with the... with the father, or the mother, the child is allowed to meet with both the parents. Hope that answers the question.

(Dr. Mohammed)_ I would like to thank all of you who gave so many questions - I have yet so many... so many questions in balance, so many people standing on the sides. We are sorry, we cannot continue on, because of time restrictions of this hall. And we would welcome you to come the IRF, and we would love to answer these questions in humble manner... I would love to answer all your questions, throughout the day - there are time limitations to this hall. I thank you all - I specially thank the Justice Kazi, an eminent Jurist, to be present here to speak to, and support our 'Womens' Rights programme' I thank the... all management, the video team present here, and all of you present who have made this programme so lively, with your enthusiasm and interest - Thank you - *As-Salam-Walaikum* - *JazakAllah Khair*...

(Casting)...

(Back Ground Azaan, By Brother Yusuf Islam)

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(Azan Continued)...